DENNIS THE MENACE

DN9200103

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1 TITLES BEGIN. FADE-IN: 1

EXT. WOODS. DAWN

A summer sun sends shafts of soft light into the darkened (X)
corridors of an ancient surviving stand of oak. A distant train (X)
whistle mingles with the song of the wood. (X)

2 EXT. WOODS. OAK TREE. DAWN 2

A tree house long absent of paint and finish rests in the limbs (X)
of an oak tree. Wooden rungs, grayed and smoothed, run from the (X)
ground to the tree house. Fox grape engulfs the building. The (X)
knocking of a woodpecker is buried by the hammering of train (X)
wheels on track joints. (X)

3 EXT. WOODS. RAILWAY BRIDGE. DAWN 3

A diesel engine, rippling the air with its heat, crosses the (X)
bridge that spans a creek, hauling a screeching jumble of (X)
freight cars.

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4 EXT. WOOD'S EDGE. MEADOW. DAWN 4

A florid splatter of wildflowers and grasses borders the woods.
A sturdy wooden sign, handsomely designed and painted, trumpets,
in whimsical script, the meadow's future:

COMING SOON. MEADOWMEAD. LUXURY HOMES FROM $99,900.

5 EXT. SMALL TOWN. DAWN. WIDE 5

A timid suburban village in a gentle valley, made distinct from (X)
the Big City on the horizon by a belt of farmland and a bow of (X)
light factories. Over the peaks of the frame houses, trees and (X)
power poles, a church spire stands tall and proud. (X)

6 EXT. TOWN. RAIL TRACKS. DAWN 6

Tracks run past a shuttered shoe factory... (X)

BLUE DOT SHOES FOR CHILDREN. TOTS TO TEENS.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: 6

A painted sign features a trio of time-lost youngsters, 5, 10, (X)
and 15, strutting shiny new shoes. (X)

7 EXT. TOWN. COMMERCIAL CENTER. DAWN 7

Common-wall stores line the center town road. (X)

8 EXT. GRADE SCHOOL. DAWN 8

A brick and slate Georgian schoolhouse. A CUSTODIAN scrubs (X)
graffiti off the front doors.

9 EXT. HOUSE. MORNING 9

The front door of a two-story frame house with a big sitting (X)
porch opens and GEORGE WILSON walks out. He's sixty-eight, a (X)
big and burly, crusty, cranky, creaky man. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He fills his lungs with fresh, morning air. (X)

EXT. WILSON HOUSE (X)

Wilson lumbers down the porch steps. He reaches into the bushes (X)
for his morning paper -- The TIMES LEADER -- cursing the paper (X)
boy. An approaching SOUND dismisses his murderous thoughts. He (X)
cups his hand to his ear. (X)

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10 ECU. BICYCLE TRAINING WHEEL. MORNING 10

A FRENZY OF NOISE and motion. The little wheel wobbles wildly as the bicycle rocks from side-to-side. Never are both training wheels down at the same time. A SCRAPING, RATTLING, JANGLING, GRINDING SOUND accompanies the speeding bicycle.

11 EXT. TREES. MORNING 11

Birds take to the wing.

EXT. STREET

Cats scatter, heading for cover.

12 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. MORNING 12

Wilson dashes into his house and slams the door.

13 CU. BACK BICYCLE TIRE. MORNING 13

Baseball cards CHATTER in the spokes.

CU. FRONT BICYCLE TIRE

Severely angled. Straws taped to the wheel struts CLICK! (X)

CU. SEAT

A little rump in denim overalls is hanging off the seat to balance the speeding, tilting bike. The NOISE CONTINUES.

CU. BICYCLE PEDAL

Block on the pedal. A battered sneaker is pumping madly. The greasy CHAIN GRINDS and skips.

14 EXT. TREE. MORNING 14

Squirrels scamper up the tree.

EXT. BUSHES. CHIPMUNK HOLE (X)

A line of chipmunks squirts down a hole. (X)

ECU. ANT HILL

Ants stream into their nest.

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15 CU. HANDLEBARS. MORNING 15

A dirty, little, scuffed-knuckled hand grips the plastic handle. Streamers flutter in the wind. The RACKET CONTINUES.

CU. BICYCLE. BACK FENDER

A piece of clothesline is tied to the back fender supports. (X)
CAMERA FOLLOWS the rope to the handle of a red wagon loaded with (X)
the wealth of a 5-year-old. A coffee can full of mud, a jar (X)
with a twig and grasshoppers, a can full of nuts and washers, a (X)
branch, a tattered teddy bear, rocks, a hunk of cement, a broken (X)
tennis racket, a brick, a bird's nest, a stack of berry boxes, (X)
a tangle of telephone wire, a piece of bubble wrap, a railroad (X)
spike, an old shoe, a garter snake. (X)

16 EXT. STREET. MILKMAN. MORNING 16

He runs to his truck and jumps in. He guns the engine and peels out.

17 EXT. ALLEY. MORNING 17

A TELEPHONE LINEMAN atop a pole slides to the ground. (X)

18 EXT. BACKYARD. MORNING 18

A TEENAGE GIRL quickly empties a clothesline of her personals and runs into the house.

19 CU. SIDEWALK. MORNING 19

The tires careen THROUGH FRAME as the bicycle whips into a driveway. The wagon follows, wheels bouncing off the pavement. (X) Trailing behind the wagon is an assortment of soup cans CLANGING LOUDLY and four muddy, loping dog paws.

EXT. DRIVEWAY. CU. BICYCLE. PEDALS

Dirty sneakers, with the toes worn thin, jam down on the pedal blocks, engaging the brakes.

CU. BICYCLE TIRE

Skids and stutters to a stop.

CU. WAGON

It slams into the back of the bicycle.

CU. TRAINING WHEEL

Off the ground and spinning to a SQUEAKY stop. TITLES END.

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20 CU. BOY. FROM BEHIND. MORNING 20

He looks over his shoulder. It's DENNIS THE MENACE. Long, (X) windblown, sweat-dampened, sun-lightened blond hair, blue eyes, (X) big grin. He yells at the top of his voice. (X)

DENNIS
HEY! MR. WILSON!

EXT. HOUSE. KITCHEN DOOR

Wilson pulls a lace curtain aside and looks out.

HIS POV

Dennis dismounts his bike. He's dressed in overalls and (X) sneakers. He's not wearing a shirt (X)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 20

or socks. RUFF, his dog, sits beside the bike, panting. He's as comfortably dirty as Dennis. They head for Wilson's back door. (X)

21 INT. WILSON HOUSE. KITCHEN. MORNING 21

A warm, cozy kitchen unchanged since the house was built in the late forties. Lace and gingham, linoleum and baked enamel. Delft plates, a cuckoo clock, avocado plant growing in a jelly jar. George turns from the door in a panic.

GEORGE
Holy smokes! He's comin' in!

22 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. BACK PORCH. MORNING 22

Dennis knocks on the door. Ruff sits down next to him.

23 INT. WILSON HOUSE. STAIRCASE. MORNING 23

MARTHA WILSON comes down the stairs in her robe and slippers. She's in her late sixties, plump and pleasant, the sweetest old lady in the world. She slows as she hears...

INT. WILSON HOUSE. DINING ROOM

George wheels out of the kitchen, banging the swinging door open. He rounds the dining room table and cuts into the foyer. Dennis' KNOCKING CONTINUES.

CU. CHINA CABINET

The good china rattles under George's heavy, hurrying footsteps.

INT. FOYER. CU. FLOOR

George's corduroy slippers skid across the floor into ECU.

CU. MARTHA

She leans tight against the wall.

INT. HOUSE. STAIRCASE

Wilson charges up the stairs.

GEORGE
Stand away, Martha, this is an emergency!

(CONTINUED)

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23 CONTINUED: 23

He disappears upstairs. Martha looks up into the stairwell in alarm.

MARTHA
George! What on earth...?!

HER POV

Up to the landing above. George pokes his head over the railing.

GEORGE
Dennis Mitchell's outside. Tell him I'm sick!

24 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. BACK PORCH. MORNING 24

Dennis' hands are sore from knocking. He shakes them out and begins knocking with his knees. Ruff starts HOWLING.

25 INT. HOUSE. STAIRCASE. DOWN ON MARTHA. MORNING 25

Looking up. Annoyed at George's hysterics.

MARTHA
I won't fib for you, George.

CU. GEORGE

Frustrated.

GEORGE
(pleading)
He's out of school for the summer. If you let him in now, he'll be here for months! We won't get a moment of peace!

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INT. HOUSE. STAIRCASE

Martha continues down the stairs.

MARTHA
If this house gets any more peaceful, George, the mice'll get bored and leave.

She exits into the dining room.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Martha! I'm begging you!

26 INT. HOUSE. UPSTAIRS LANDING. MORNING 26

George shakes an angry, frustrated fist and dashes into the bedroom.

27 CU. MEDICINE CHEST. MORNING 27

The door flies open. George cleans the shelves of medicine bottles.

INT. BATHROOM

George runs out of the bathroom, his arms loaded with bottles.

28 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. BACK PORCH. MORNING 28

Dennis is banging his head against the door. Ruff is BARKING.

29 INT. KITCHEN. MORNING 29

Martha crosses to the door.

INT. KITCHEN. CU. DOOR

It opens on Dennis. Ruff stops BARKING. Dennis smiles.

DENNIS
Hi, Mrs. Wilson. Is Mr. Wilson here? I don't have to go back to school until I'm six. I wanted to tell him that I can see him all the time now, not just after school and on Saturday and Sunday and holidays and when I'm home with the flubug.

CU. MRS. WILSON

She's conflicted about what to tell Dennis.

MRS. WILSON
Mr. Wilson's upstairs, dear.

CU. DENNIS

Sweet, heart-melting smile.

DENNIS
(serious and sincere)
Can I go up and see him or is he in the bathroom reading the newspaper?

(CONTINUED)

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29 CONTINUED: 29

INT. KITCHEN

Martha steps back from the door. She looks up, wondering how bad she'll get it from George if she lets Dennis in.

MARTHA
I'm not sure Mr. Wilson wants to see anyone right now.

DENNIS
Is he bare naked?

MARTHA
No, Dennis. He's...

DENNIS
Does he got his teeth out?

MARTHA
No, dear. He's...

DENNIS
Sleeping?

MARTHA
(relieved)
Yes, dear. He's sleeping.

DENNIS
Doesn't he get up real, real, real early?

MARTHA
Usually.

DENNIS
Does he got an alarm clock?

MARTHA
Yes.

DENNIS
Is it broke?

MARTHA
No.

DENNIS
Howcome it didn't wake him up?

Martha's getting cornered.

MARTHA
Maybe he didn't hear it.

(CONTINUED)

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29 CONTINUED: (2) 29

Dennis nods. He's thinking.

DENNIS
You know what, Mrs. Wilson?

MARTHA
What?

DENNIS
I think Mr. Wilson wants to be awake but he doesn't know it because he's sleeping. And you know what I do when my dad is sleeping and he doesn't want to?

MARTHA
(suspicious)
What?

Dennis grabs the door, steps back, and slams it shut.

30 INT. WILSON HOUSE. BEDROOM. MORNING 30

Wilson's arranging medicine bottles on his nightstand. He freezes as he HEARS THE DOOR SLAM.

GEORGE
He's in! (X)

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31 INT. KITCHEN. DOOR. MORNING 31

Dennis opens the door and peeks in. (X)

DENNIS
I bet Mr. Wilson's wide-awake now. No grown-up person can sleep when somebody does something like that to their door. It chips the paint and makes the hinges loose.

31A INT. WILSON HOUSE. BEDROOM. MORNING 31A (

Wilson yanks down the window shades. (X)

31B INT. WILSON HOUSE. STAIRCASE. MORNING 31B (

Dennis tiptoes up the stairs. (X)

32 INT. BEDROOM. WILSON. MORNING 32

Wilson whips off his robe and scrambles into bed. A beat and he (X)
sits up and musses his hair. He flops back on the bed. (X)

CU. DOOR

It opens a crack. Dennis peeks in.

DENNIS (X)
(whispers) (X)
Mr. Wilson? (X)

(CONTINUED)

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32 CONTINUED: 32

HIS POV

In contrast to his frantic preparations, Wilson is in bed, snoring gently. With the shades drawn and the medicine on the nightstand, the bedroom looks like a sickroom.

INT. BEDROOM

Dennis creeps in. He quietly closes the door and tiptoes to the bed.

DENNIS
(whispers)
Mr. Wilson?

A beat and he looks at the medicine bottles. He whistles softly.

DENNIS
Poor old Mr. Wilson must be real sick. No wonder he ain't up.

He leans over the bed and looks at Mr. Wilson.

DENNIS
Yikes! His skin looks like old, wrinkled-up, dead leaves.

He puts his head on Wilson's chest and listens to his heart. We HEAR THE SOUND of a WASHING MACHINE.

DENNIS
Wow! His heart sounds like our washing machine.

CU. WILSON

Opens his eyes and peeks at Dennis. He's concerned.

INT. BEDROOM

Dennis puts his fingers to Wilson's neck.

DENNIS
Oh, no. His throat's lumpy and he's growing extra skin.

Dennis takes out his little flashlight, turns it on, and puts it in Wilson's mouth. His cheeks light up.

ECU. WILSON

His eyes pop open in alarm.

(CONTINUED)

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32 CONTINUED: (2) 32

INT. BEDROOM

Dennis shines the flashlight around Wilson's mouth.

DENNIS
His tongue's very ugly and blue and spotty.

(CONTINUED)

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32 CONTINUED: (3) 32

He takes the flashlight out of Wilson's mouth. He's about to put it away when something occurs to him. He shines the light up Wilson's nose and looks into Wilson's mouth.

DENNIS
Cool.

He puts his flashlight away and gently rests his hand on Wilson's forehead.

DENNIS
Uh, oh. He gots a fever. He needs a aspirin. (X) (X)

(CONTINUED)

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32 CONTINUED: (4) 32

He plucks an aspirin bottle off the nightstand. (X)

DENNIS
For fast, effective relief of pain and fever. The brand doctors recommend most.

He fiddles with a child-proof cap and handily removes it. A cotton wad holds the aspirin caplets in. Dennis shakes the bottle furiously. The cotton pops out and a hundred tablets scatter, tinkling and bouncing across the wood floor. (X)

INSERT: DENNIS' FEET

Dennis picks a tablet up off the floor. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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32 CONTINUED: (5) 32

INT. BEDROOM

Dennis blows on the tablet, licks it, and wipes it dry on his overalls. He climbs back up on the bed. He stands on his knees (X)
and leans in on Wilson. He tries to drop the aspirin into his (X)
mouth. (X)

CU. WILSON'S MOUTH

Each time Dennis reaches in with the aspirin, Wilson closes his (X)
mouth. (X)

CU. DENNIS (X)

He tries to time his moves with Wilson's snoring mouth opening (X)
and closing. After a number of attempts, he gets frustrated. (X)
He sits back and reaches around behind his back. (X)

CU. DENNIS' BACK POCKET (X)

Dennis pulls his slingshot out of his pocket. (X)

ECU. SLINGSHOT (X)

Dennis loads the aspirin. (X)

INT. BEDROOM (X)

Dennis draws the slingshot back and takes careful aim. (X)

CU. WILSON'S MOUTH

It opens as Wilson takes a breath. (X)

CU. DENNIS

FROM INSIDE WILSON'S OPEN MOUTH, we see Dennis with the slingshot pulled back as far as it will go, tongue out, left eye squeezed shut. He releases.

INT. BEDROOM

Dennis lets fly. The aspirin rockets into Wilson's mouth and (X)
down his throat. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He vaults up and grabs his throat. He gags. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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32 CONTINUED: (6) 32

OMITTED (33-34)

35 INT. WILSON HOUSE. KITCHEN. MORNING 35

Martha's making breakfast. Pots and pans rattle, china chatters. She looks up as George's heavy footsteps pound down the stairs.

36 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. FRONT PORCH. MORNING 36

The front door swings open and Dennis races out and leaps off the porch.

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. WIDE

Dennis cuts across Wilson's lawn to his house next door. It's a cheery, two-story Colonial.

(CONTINUED)

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36 CONTINUED: 36

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PORCH

Wilson runs out on the porch.

WILSON
(yells next door)
Don't you ever come back! You hear me?! NEVER!

He turns and walks back to the door. He gags and chokes, coughs and goes inside. He slams the door.

37 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. MORNING 37

Dennis pokes his head out of the bushes.

DENNIS
Poor Mr. Wilson. He's so sick he didn't even know it was me.

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38 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. KITCHEN. MORNING 38

HENRY and ALICE MITCHELL, are at the kitchen table, dressed for work. Henry is a mild, round-shouldered man in a simple suit and tie. Alice is wholesome and pretty. She's wearing a suit. Alice is putting calendar pages in a new personal organizer. Henry's sewing a button onto his suit coat. (X)

HENRY
Nervous about the new job? (X)

She is nervous but she puts on a brave face.

ALICE
I worked before Dennis was born. The world of commercial real estate couldn't have changed that much. (X)

HENRY
Starting part-time gives you a chance to ease back into it. Managing shopping malls can't be much more difficult than managing...

Dennis bursts in through the back door.

HENRY
Where have you been?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: 38

DENNIS
I was at Mr. Wilson's house and boy, is he ever sick. He has a fever. He's burnin' up!

ALICE
I better call Martha.

Alice gets up and crosses to the wall phone and dials a number.

HENRY
(to Dennis)
You didn't bother him, did you?

DENNIS
Nope. I gave him an aspirin. And he don't like 'em any better than me. When he swallowed it, he jumped up and yelled God's son's name.

Alice looks back at Henry with dread.

HENRY
You shouldn't visit people so early in the morning..

DENNIS
That's the only time I know for sure they'll be home.

ALICE
George? Alice Mitchell. Are you feeling alright? Dennis said that you were...

She winces as Wilson launches into a tirade. We can HEAR HIS MUTED VOICE.

CU. HENRY

FROM BEHIND. He slowly looks back over his shoulder at Alice with a sour expression. Trouble again.

CU. ALICE

She listens patiently.

ALICE
I'm very sorry. I...

She's cut off.

(CONTINUED)

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38 CONTINUED: (2) 38

ALICE
I'm...
(pause)
You're...

CU. HENRY

Holding his hangdog expression.

CU. ALICE

She cuts George off.

ALICE
George! You're absolutely right. We're very sorry. We'll talk to him.
(pause)
Thank you for pointing it out. I hope you can forgive him. Bye.

She hangs up the phone.

INT. KITCHEN

Alice turns from the phone. She folds her arms across her chest and stares at Dennis.

DENNIS
(nervously)
Hi.

ALICE
Did you shoot an aspirin in Mr. Wilson's mouth?

HENRY
(moans)
Oh, God...

DENNIS
I didn't want him to bite my fingers off with his big fake teeth. Those things are sharp!

ALICE
(to Henry)
George said Dennis shot an aspirin in his mouth with his slingshot.

HENRY
What slingshot?

(CONTINUED)

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38 CONTINUED: (3) 38

ALICE
(to Dennis)
Do you have a slingshot?

DENNIS
I'm not sure.

HENRY
(holds out his hand)
Give it to me.

Dennis reaches into his back pocket for the slingshot. He hands it over to Henry.

DENNIS
You can't keep it forever. It's not mine. It's Joey's.

ALICE
Mr. Wilson is very angry with you.

DENNIS (X)
I thought he was sick! I was just trying to help!

ALICE
He didn't need your help and he didn't ask for your help and he didn't invite you to his house at six-thirty in the morning.

DENNIS
Nobody invites people to their house at six-thirty in the morning, for gosh sakes.

HENRY
You go sit in the corner and think about what you did.

DENNIS
For how long?

HENRY
Until you're sorry.

DENNIS
Oh, good. I'm sorry now.

ALICE
He can't sit in the corner, Henry. I have to drop him off at Margaret Wade's house.

(CONTINUED)

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38 CONTINUED: (4) 38

Dennis SCREAMS!

DENNIS
Margaret's house?! I didn't do anything bad enough to have to go to Margaret's house.
(pleads)
She's a lunatic. I'll go crazy. She tortures me. She's mean. She's ugly, she doesn't share... (X)

ALICE
I made arrangements with Mrs. Wade for you to go to their house when I work.

DENNIS
Are you serious?

ALICE
You can't spend the summer unsupervised. You're out of school...

DENNIS
(without hesitation)
I'll go back.

HENRY
Your mother made arrangements. That's it. I don't want any arguments.

Dennis slumps forward and drops his forehead on the table with a THUD!

DENNIS
My life is falling apart.

39 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. MORNING 39

Wilson is wheeling Dennis' bike and wagon across his driveway to (X) the Mitchell driveway. Henry comes out of the house. (X)

HENRY
Hello, George. Sorry about this morning.

George rubs some unidentified stickiness he's gotten from the (X) handlebars off his hands with his handkerchief. (X)

GEORGE
I'm not going to mince words, Mitchell. (X)
Your kid is driving me nuts. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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39 CONTINUED: 39

HENRY
I've talked to him. I'll talk to him again.

GEORGE
Maybe it isn't talk that he needs. (X)
When my old man had something important to tell me, he told me with his belt.

HENRY
That's not how I deal with my son, Mr. Wilson.

GEORGE
Well, however you're dealing with him, he hasn't learned it's not good manners to break in on a fella and shoot an (X)
aspirin down his throat. (X)

HENRY
Mr. Wilson, he's five.

GEORGE
When I was five I had some respect.

HENRY
If you did you were probably a pretty exceptional boy.

GEORGE
In 1925 I wasn't the exception. I was the rule.

HENRY
I'll make sure Dennis doesn't come by anymore.

GEORGE
Careful how you say it. I don't want everybody in the neighborhood to think I'm a child-hater or an ogre. I'm a reasonable man who expects reasonable treatment from his neighbors and their children. I was with the Post Office for forty...

HENRY
(interrupts)
I'm running a little late. If you'd like, I can come by after work and continue the conversation.

Henry opens his car door and tosses his briefcase on the front seat. He gets in. (X) (X)

(CONTINUED)

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39 CONTINUED: (2) 39

GEORGE
There's nothing to continue. I've said my piece. We'll leave it at that. The boy can't come over here unless he's gonna behave himself.

HENRY
He won't be over at all.

GEORGE
Don't make me out to be a grump. I didn't say never. I said...

HENRY
I really have to go.

Henry backs out of the driveway. (X)

CU. GEORGE

One last futile attempt to continue the conversation.

GEORGE
He's out of school now. He can't spend all his free time here.
(pause)
I'm not the bad guy in this, Mitchell! I'm the victim!

(CONTINUED)

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39 CONTINUED: (3) 39

HIS POV

Henry's car disappears down the street.

40 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. MORNING 40

Martha comes out of the house, steps down the porch and approaches George.

MARTHA
George? Who're you shouting at?

GEORGE
Mitchell. And I wasn't shouting. I was making my point. It's not right that his youngster can run wild, doing as he pleases without regard for people or property.

MARTHA
He's only a boy, George.

George glances at Dennis' house. CAMERA PUSHES IN TO CU.

GEORGE
He's gonna knot my rope once too often. I can't take that kid. He's a menace.

RETURN TO SCENE (X)

Martha pats George's arm, breaking the angry spell he's put himself under.

MARTHA
You better come in and have your breakfast. We're due at the Garden Club at nine.

GEORGE
Today's an important day for me and I'm already in a lather because of that kid. I don't know if I'm even going to be able to enjoy my moment of triumph.

MARTHA
Don't get your hopes up. There are (X)
lots of other gardens in town just as (X)
nice as yours. (X)

GEORGE
I'm a shoo-in. Who else has a Night (X)
Blooming Mock Orchid flowering this (X)
year? (X)

(CONTINUED)

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40 CONTINUED: 40

MARTHA
It's an awfully homely-looking plant, George. I can't imagine it would have much sway over the selection committee.

GEORGE
Hang the looks of the thing. It opens before your eyes in the light of the full moon. It's a marvel, Martha. Forty years to mature and blossom. The flower opens and withers in a matter of moments. There isn't a gardener in town who has a plant that requires a forty year investment for ten seconds of splendor.

41 EXT. WILSON'S BACKYARD. HIGH ANGLE. MORNING 41

A magnificent garden leading off a brick patio. CAMERA BOOMS (X) DOWN INTO THE GARDEN and MOVES THROUGH an arched trellis, down (X) a narrow path lined with roses, to a tiny, round, five-foot- (X) tall, open-sided iron pavilion with glass roof panels. An iron (X) fence surrounds it. A sprinkler system sprays a gentle mist on (X) the four-foot-tall Mock Orchid in the pavilion. CAMERA (X) CONTINUES IN on the woody stem with three large, waxy leaves, (X) and STOPS ON a fat, round bud. (X)

42 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET. DAY. LATER 42

Alice's Ford Taurus wagon rolls down the street.

INT. STATION WAGON

Dennis is sitting in the front seat, belted in, arms crossed, scowl on his face. Alice glances at Dennis.

ALICE
How do you feel about me working?

Dennis doesn't respond.

ALICE
You don't like it, huh?

No response.

ALICE
I'm not sure I like it. What do you think about that?

(CONTINUED)

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42 CONTINUED: 42

CU. DENNIS

He thinks about it. It surprises him but he doesn't want to let on. He sneaks a look at Alice.

INT. CAR

Alice knows her remark affected him.

ALICE
But to live the way we're used to, I need to work. A lot of moms work. And the best I could do finding someone to watch you is to make an arrangement with Mrs. Wade.

DENNIS
What about Joey? Did you think about that? What if he comes over? He'll think I moved.

ALICE
He won't come over.

DENNIS
Wanna bet?

ALICE
Sure. I'll bet you a quarter.

DENNIS
What can that buy?

ALICE
Not much.

DENNIS
Okay.

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Alice offers her hand. Dennis shakes it.

ALICE
(after a pause)
Do you want to pay me now?

DENNIS
You don't pay until the bet's over.

ALICE
The bet's over.

DENNIS
No, it's not.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2) 42

ALICE
Yes, it is. Joey's mother made plans with Mrs. Wade just like I did.

Dennis thinks for a moment. He looks at Alice, puzzled.

ALICE
Joey's at Margaret's house.

43 CU. JOEY. DAY 43

Five. Dark-haired, big cheeks. He's frowning. (X)

CU. MARGARET

Five. Glasses, curly hair. Her patent leather pumps are (X) cracked and scuffed, her socks are dirty and hanging down on her (X) shoes. She has a bandage on one knee. She's wearing a dingy (X) party dress. The seat is worn thin. She's angry.

MARGARET
Do it!

CU. JOEY

He shakes his head, no.

CU. MARGARET

She leans back, adjusts her glasses, sighs.

MARGARET
I can make you.

CU. JOEY

A tinge of concern.

JOEY
How?

CU. MARGARET

She raises her balled fist and squints angrily.

EXT. MARGARET'S HOUSE. BACKYARD

Margaret and Joey are sitting on a picnic bench. She's holding (X) a well-played-with baby doll. The nylon hair is twisted and (X)

(CONTINUED)

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43 CONTINUED: 43

tangled. One eye is permanently shut. (X)

JOEY
No.

MARGARET
Then I'll slug your face.

JOEY
I'll slug you back.

MARGARET
You can't hit a girl.

JOEY
I can too.

MARGARET
Try it. I'll scream so awfully bloody deadly horrible that my mom'll think you tried to murder me. And I'll tell her you did and she'll believe me because boys are like that and girls aren't.

JOEY
That stinks.

MARGARET
So do fish and there's nothing you can do about it. So quit wasting time. Moosh your lips together and let's get this over with.

Joey takes a deep breath and reluctantly puckers up.

MARGARET
Close your eyes!

JOEY
Why?

MARGARET
I don't want to get your slimy, gross eyeball juice on my glasses.

Joey closes his eyes. He puckers again.

INSERT: BABY DOLL

Margaret yanks the diaper off the baby doll.

(CONTINUED)

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43 CONTINUED: (2) 43

CU. JOEY

Eyes squeezed shut, lips puckered.

CU. DOLL'S BOTTOM

Margaret pushes the doll's bottom toward Joey.

MARGARET
Kiss me!

CU. JOEY. PROFILE

He kisses the doll.

EXT. BACKYARD. MARGARET AND JOEY

Joey opens his eyes and discovers, to his horror, what he's done. Margaret laughs.

MARGARET
Sucker!

She gets up from the picnic table, turns on her heels and heads into the house. Joey sits on the picnic bench fuming. He's been thoroughly had.

44 EXT. WADE HOUSE. DAY 44

A shingled Cape Cod with a picket fence. Big tree in the front yard. The Taurus wagon pulls into the drive.

45 INT. WADE HOUSE. ENTRY HALL. DAY 45

PENNY WADE, Margaret's mother, comes down the stairs. Margaret runs in from the kitchen. She swings around the newel post and heads up the stairs.

PENNY
Dennis is here.

MARGARET
I know. I'm gonna go powder my bottom.

PENNY
No, sweetheart. It's powder your nose.

MARGARET
Mommy, boys aren't interested in girls' noses.

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46 EXT. WADE HOUSE. DAY 46

Alice is pulling Dennis out of the car. He's gone completely limp.

ALICE
Dennis! Get up!

She drags him from the car.

ALICE
You're being a baby!

She kicks the car door closed.

ALICE
Get up! Right this instant! Don't you dare embarrass me!

CU. DENNIS

Catatonic.

EXT. WADE HOUSE. ALICE

She tugs on his arm.

ALICE
Fine, I'll drag you inside.

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EXT. WADE HOUSE. FRONT PORCH

Penny stands at the door watching with a raised eyebrow.

HER POV

Alice is dragging Dennis to the house. She looks up and sees Penny. She puts on an embarrassed smile.

ALICE
Penny! Hi!

EXT. WADE HOUSE. PORCH. PENNY

A catty grin.

PENNY
Having a problem?

CU. ALICE

She sighs and nods.

ALICE
He's not happy with the arrangement.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 46

EXT. WADE HOUSE

Penny approaches Alice. Dennis remains lifeless.

PENNY
You need to explain it to him. Kids need to understand a situation just like big people do.

Penny kneels beside Dennis.

PENNY
Dennis, honey? Hi. You know what? Mrs. Wade needs a favor from you.

She looks up at Alice.

PENNY
You don't need to hold his arm, Alice. We'll talk this through. He has to learn that children are treated like children when they behave like children.

Alice is offended. She drops Dennis' arm.

PENNY
Good. Dennis? I respect you and your feelings.

CU. ALICE

She rolls her eyes.

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47 INT. WADE HOUSE. ENTRY HALL. DAY. LATER 47

The door swings open and Alice and Penny drag Dennis in. They lay him down on the floor.

PENNY
(saving face)
At least I think we broke through. Right, Dennis?

CU. DENNIS

His expression hasn't changed.

48 EXT. WADE BACKYARD. MARGARET. DOWN ANGLE. DAY 48

Margaret's looking up with her hands on her hips. She's annoyed.

48 CONTINUED: 48

MARGARET
This isn't fair!

HER POV

Dennis and Joey are sitting in an apple tree, looking down at Margaret.

DENNIS
It's not my fault you wear dumb dresses and doll shoes.

JOEY
It's not my fault either.

EXT. WADE BACKYARD

Margaret stands under the apple tree.

MARGARET
You guys are the boring ones. There's lots to do.

DENNIS
Oh, really? Like what? Wash dolls?

MARGARET
I have hundreds of toys.

DENNIS
Your toys are all soft and pink and harmless and safe.

MARGARET
We don't have to play with toys. We can practice singing songs. We could put on a play or a puppet show.

JOEY
We could bury you alive.

MARGARET
I could pound your face.

DENNIS
It doesn't matter anyway, Margaret. We're leaving pretty soon. We have work to do.

MARGARET
You can't leave. My mother's watching you. And you're lying because what work would you have to do?

(CONTINUED)

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48 CONTINUED: (2) 48

JOEY
We're gonna make a fort.

MARGARET
Get lost.

DENNIS
We're gonna go to Turley's Woods. There's a fort there that we're gonna take over and fix up.

MARGARET
If you're going there, you have to take me. Sorry.

DENNIS
Not on your life. Then you'd know where it is and you'd come over all the time.

MARGARET
You can't leave unless I go with you, or I'll tell on you, so tough kitty paws. I'm going. Climb down from there. I'll go get my purse.

EXT. TREE. DENNIS AND JOEY

They slowly look at each other and sigh. There's no argument. They lose. They look ahead. Defeated.

48A EXT. WOODS. DAY 48A (:

The kids walk through a deep and towering wood. (X)

DENNIS (V.O.) (X)
When your mom talks on the phone, how (X)
long does she talk for? (X)

MARGARET (V.O.) (X)
Hours. (X)

DENNIS (V.O.) (X)
Good. We can stay a long time. (X)

EXT. WOODS. RAILROAD BRIDGE (X)

The kids slide down an embankment to a creek. (X)

MARGARET (V.O.) (X)
No, we can't. We have to go back to (X)
eat lunch and then we have to take care (X)
of my doll. She's sick. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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48A CONTINUED: 48A (:

EXT. CREEK (X)

Dennis leads the kids across the water, climbing over boulders in the creek-bed. (X) (X)

JOEY (V.O.) (X)
How could your doll get sick? (X)

MARGARET (V.O.) (X)
Easy. She took a nap with an infected teddy bear. (X) (X)

48B EXT. WOODS. TRAIN TRACK. DAY 48B (:

A freight train rounds a curve heading for CAMERA. (X)

48C EXT. WOODS. CREEK. RAILROAD BRIDGE. DAY 48C (:

The kids have crossed the creek and are standing under a railroad bridge. The TRAIN IS APPROACHING. (X) (X)

DENNIS (X)
Get ready! (X)

The kids cover their ears. (X)

EXT. RAIL BRIDGE. UP ANGLE (X)

From the creek up. The TRAIN CRASHES INTO FRAME. (X)

EXT. RAIL BRIDGE. CREEK (X)

The kids SCREAM at the top of their voices as the train passes overhead. (X) (X)

48D EXT. TREE HOUSE. DAY 48D (:

UP ANGLE on the old tree house we saw earlier. (X)

EXT. WOODS. DENNIS AND JOEY. DOWN ANGLE (X)

Dennis, Joey, and Margaret are looking up at the tree house. (X)

DENNIS (X)
That thing's been here our whole life and we never knew it. (X) (X)

JOEY (X)
Do you think anybody lives in it? (X)

(CONTINUED)

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48D CONTINUED: 48D (:

DENNIS (X)
Just squirrels and birds. (X)

JOEY (X)
It looks kinda junky. (X)

DENNIS (X)
We'll fix it up. (X)

MARGARET (X)
Oh, good. I'll be the decorator. (X)
We'll put on a special room for the (X)
babies and a powder room for when we (X)
have company. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Forts don't have powder rooms. (X)

MARGARET (X)
Oh, really? Where do the soldiers' (X)
wives go to freshen up? (X)

JOEY (X)
(furious) (X)
Soldiers don't have wives, stupid! (X)

MARGARET (X)
Don't call me stupid, baby-rump kisser. (X)

Joey backs down. (X)

MARGARET (X)
It won't be a fort. It'll be a house. (X)
A love nest. (X)

She looks at Dennis with a love-silly smile. He stares back deadpan. (X) (X)

MARGARET (X)
Let's go up and see what color carpet (X)
we should get. (X)

She starts up the ladder. (X)

JOEY (X)
Do forts got carpet? (X)

DENNIS (X)
Nope. (X)

JOEY (X)
(to Margaret) (X)
FORT'S DON'T GOT CARPET! (X)

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49 EXT. GARDEN CLUB. DAY 49

A small, brick, public building. Beautiful gardens.

50 INT. GARDEN CLUB. DAY 50

GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS are seated in the small rotunda. George and Martha are in the front row. Before the group is a table manned by a frail old man in a suit a size too big for him, EDWARD LITTLE, and a stubby old woman, EDITH BUTTERWELL. Mr. Little is reading from a sheet of notes. He's wearing thick glasses.

MR. LITTLE
The selection committee has informed Mrs. Butterwell and I that this summer's Floraganza will be held in the garden of...

Mr. Little shuffles through his notes.

(CONTINUED)

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50 CONTINUED: 50

CU. GEORGE

Anxiously biting his lower lip. He wants the event.

GEORGE
(to himself)
George Wilson, you old fool.

INT. GARDEN CLUB. MR. LITTLE AND MRS. BUTTERWELL

He takes off his reading glasses and puts on his distance glasses. He leans back from the notes. He can't read them. He shows them to Mrs. Butterwell. She opens her purse and takes out her big, blue, rhinestone glasses. He switches back to his reading glasses. She can't read the note either. She puts on his distance glasses. She still can't read it.

CU. GEORGE AND MARTHA

George is so anxious he wants to grab the notes and read them himself. Martha is nervously watching George out of the corner of her eye.

INT. GARDEN CLUB. MR. LITTLE AND MRS. BUTTERWELL

He hands her his reading glasses. She gives him her glasses. They both look at the note and announce, together...

MR. LITTLE AND MRS. BUTTERWELL
George Wilson.

INT. GARDEN CLUB. GEORGE AND MARTHA

George pumps a triumphant fist. Martha kisses his cheek. The Members APPLAUD.

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50A EXT. TREE HOUSE. WINDOW. DAY 50A (:

Dennis, Joey, and Margaret are in the window, looking out. (X)

DENNIS (X)
This is the highest up I ever was by (X)
myself. (X)

MARGARET (X)
I can see all the way to town. (X)

JOEY (X)
This must be howcome birds like to sit (X)
in trees, huh? (X)

(CONTINUED)

50A CONTINUED: 50A (:

THEIR POV (X)

The woods, the town beyond, the treetops. (X)

EXT. TREE HOUSE. DENNIS, JOEY, MARGARET (X)

Looking out wistfully at the lovely, intoxicating view. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Sometimes it's good to be a kid. (X)

Margaret looks at him. He doesn't notice. She loves him. Joey (X)
smiles. A TRAIN WHISTLE BLOWS. DISSOLVE TO... (X)

50B EXT. SKY. MOON. NIGHT 50B (:

A half-moon. CAMERA TILTS DOWN to... (X)

EXT. WILSON'S GARDEN. MOCK ORCHID PLANT. NIGHT (X)

The moonlight shines on the bud. The tips of the coverlet (X)
leaves peel back. The slightest movement. Barely a stirring. (X)

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51 thru 52 OMITTED 51 thru (X) 52

53 INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT 53

Henry's washing dishes. Alice is balancing her checkbook.

(CONTINUED)

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53 CONTINUED: 53

HENRY
How did Dennis do at the Wade's?

ALICE
I guess the kids got along fine. Penny said they weren't any trouble. She hardly saw them all day.

He turns the water off and turns away from the sink.

HENRY
You feel good about work?

ALICE
I guess so. It was confusing. I tried to send a fax on the copy machine. The Federal Express man underestimated my age by five years.

HENRY
Congratulations.

ALICE
The bad news is, I'm probably going to have to do some travelling. Soon. They want me to see their projects in Missouri, Oklahoma and Nebraska.
(pause)
I would feel very strange leaving Dennis overnight.

HENRY
I gotta do it. You get used to it.

ALICE
That's what I worry about. I don't want to get used to being away from Dennis. My mother was always home for me.

HENRY
That didn't make her a better mother. A child understands a parent's motivation. He'll know in his heart you're doing it because you have to. (X)
If that wasn't the case, none of us (X)
would like our fathers. (X)

ALICE
(with a sigh)
Everything's changing.

(CONTINUED)

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53 CONTINUED: (2) 53

HENRY
Not everything. There're a few things that'll always be the same.

54 EXT. STREET. NIGHT 54

CHILDREN SCREAMING WITH GLEE. CAMERA sinks through the trees to a horde of KIDS and dogs running down the street and scattering into the yards.

EXT. YARD. TREE

Dennis is facing a tree trunk, his head buried in his crossed arms. He's counting. Ruff's sitting next to him. (X) (X)

DENNIS
One Mississippi, two Mississippi...
(pause)
Gunther? Are you watching where everybody goes?

CU. GUNTHER

Three. In overall shorts, no shirt, dirty face. (X)

GUNTHER
Yep.

55 OMITTED 55 (X)

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56 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 56 (:

George and Martha are sitting on their front porch. Martha's watching the Kids with a warm smile. George is smoking a pipe. (X)
He watches the game with increasing interest. (X)

GEORGE
I was unbeatable in hide-and-seek.

MARTHA
Hiding or seeking?

GEORGE
Both. I had a nose for hiding places.

MARTHA
I wouldn't think you'd be good at hiding.

GEORGE
Why not?

MARTHA
Weren't you fat?

GEORGE
(after a stare, offended) (X) (X)
I was husky.

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He looks back to the game.

HIS POV

Gunther's in the driveway across the street, pointing under a car. Dennis looks.

DENNIS
I see Joey and Mike!

The Kids take off. Dennis races them to the tree.

EXT. PORCH

George jumps out of his rocking chair.

GEORGE
(yells to the Kids)
He's cheating!

MARTHA
Let the children play.

GEORGE
Dennis is cheating. He's using the Beckman kid as a spy.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: 56

George sets his pipe down and climbs down off the porch.

MARTHA
What're you doing?

GEORGE
I'm going to even things up.
(yells)
Gunther! Your dad's going to the ice cream store. He wants to take you with him. Hurry up and get home!

EXT. STREET. GUNTHER

Gunther smiles and takes off.

57 EXT. PORCH. NIGHT 57

George returns to his rocker. Martha stares incredulously.

GEORGE
It's fair now.

MARTHA
You lied to a toddler, George. Think how disappointed he's going to be when he gets home.

GEORGE
The boy was cheating. Better he suffer (X)
a little disappointment now than grow (X)
up on the wrong side of the law. You (X)
think Al Capone played fair when he was (X)
in diapers? (X)

George picks up his pipe and relights it.

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57A EXT. YARD. TREE. JOEY. NIGH 57A (:

He's IT, counting... (X)

JOEY (X)
One Mississippi, two Mississippi... (X)

He turns from the tree, puzzled. (X)

JOEY (X)
(yells) (X)
Which Mississippi comes after two (X)
Mississippi? (X)

57B EXT. DENNIS' BACKYARD. NIGHT 57B (:

Dennis runs into his yard. Ruff lopes behind. (X)

57C INT. DENNIS' GARAGE. NIGHT 57C (:

Dennis runs into the dark garage. He closes the door and turns (X)
to face... (X)

CU. MARGARET (X)

She's in the garage. Smiling. (X)

MARGARET (X)
I'm a girl. You're a boy. We're (X)
alone. The night is young. (X)

CU. DENNIS (X)

He leans back in horror. (X)

CU. MARGARET (X)

She wipes her lips with the back of her hand. (X)

MARGARET (X)
Kiss me or I'll knock your block off! (X)

57D EXT. DENNIS' HOUSE. FRONT PORCH. NIGHT 57D (:

Alice sticks her head out the door. (X)

ALICE (X)
Dennis! It's time to come in now! (X)

57E INT. GARAGE. NIGHT 57E (:

Margaret sighs in defeat. Dennis takes off. (X)

MARGARET (X)
You got out of it this time! Next time (X)
it won't be so easy! (X)

57F EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. NIGHT 57F (:

The street is empty and quiet. (X)

58 INT. DENNIS' ROOM. NIGHT 58

Dennis is in bed. Alice is next to him. Henry's standing in the doorway. Dennis is saying his prayers.

(CONTINUED)

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58 CONTINUED: 58

DENNIS
God bless everybody. In alphabetical order.

ALICE
It's very nice that you want to bless everybody but you should single out the people who are most important to you.

(CONTINUED)

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58 CONTINUED: (2) 58

DENNIS
(to the Lord)
Hold on a second, my mom's telling me something. I'll be right back.
(to Alice)
That takes a long time, Mom, and it's very easy to leave someone out.

ALICE
You can't take enough time out for people you care about? If you forget someone, He'll understand. Okay?

She kisses him.

ALICE
Good night, sweetheart.

HENRY
Good night, buddy.

DENNIS
Good night, old geezer.

ALICE
That's not a very nice way to say good night to your father.

DENNIS
If a kid's nickname's buddy, what's a dad's?

ALICE
Dad.

DENNIS
Good night, Dad.

Alice crosses to the door.

ALICE
Prayers.

She and Henry step out.

(CONTINUED)

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58 CONTINUED: (3) 58

DENNIS
I'm back. Do everybody but start with my mother, father, Ruff, who's my dog which you probably don't cover but if you see the dog God, pass it on, Grandma and Grandpa and Grandma and Grandpa. Joey, Mrs. Wilson, and Mr. Wilson. When you bless him, be careful, he gets cranky when you try to help him. Thank you. Over and out.

59 EXT. TOWN. WIDE. NIGHT 59 (:

Far below and beyond, the light in Dennis' room goes off. All (X)
across town bedroom lights go off. CAMERA BOOMS DOWN into the (X)
woods. A silent moment and a TRAIN CRASHES THROUGH FRAME. (X)

EXT. TRACK (X)

IRON WHEELS SQUEAK AND CHATTER THROUGH FRAME. (X)

EXT. TRACK (X)

Daisies are stripped of their petals in the violent wake of the (X)
passing train. (X)

INT. BOXCAR (X)

The sliding door is open. The town passes beyond. A dark (X)
figure steps INTO FRAME. (X)

ECU. MAN (X)

Deep in shadow. Eyes squinting as he sees... (X)

HIS POV (X)

The little town below. (X)

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60 EXT. WOODS. TRAIN TRACKS. NIGHT 60 (:

The figure leaps out of the boxcar and tumbles down the (X)
embankment, standing into CLOSE-UP. His name is SWITCHBLADE (X)
SAM. He's unshaven, scarred, with a dark overcoat and a duffel (X)
bag over his shoulder. He brings a switchblade knife up INTO (X)
FRAME. He snaps it open with a sharp CLICK! He uses the tip of (X)
the knife to dislodge something from between his front teeth. (X)
He grins. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
Ain't that a pretty sight. (X)

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: 60 (

He laughs softly. (X)

HIS POV (X)

The town lies below. The CHURCH BELLS RING the hour. (X)

61 EXT. WOODS. MORNING 61

Dennis, Joey, and Margaret tromp through the woods. Margaret carries a piece of carpeting. Joey pushes a toy stroller loaded with tools, Margaret's doll, and its accessories. Dennis carries an armload of discarded lumber.

(CONTINUED)

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61 CONTINUED: 61

JOEY
We could have carried a lot more stuff if you didn't have to bring that idiotic doll and all her junk. (X)

MARGARET
She's not idiotic. She's an important training tool. You know why men are so lousy when it comes to taking care of babies?

DENNIS
They have better things to do.

MARGARET
Like what? Play golf and drink beer?

DENNIS
Hunting. Having wars. Driving cars. Shaving. Cleaning fish. Do you know how to do that?

JOEY
Me?

DENNIS
Margaret.

MARGARET
I don't cut any animals open no matter how dumb and cold they are.

DENNIS
If you didn't have men you wouldn't have fish.

MARGARET
If you didn't have women, you wouldn't have babies which means you wouldn't have people.

JOEY
You need men to have babies.

MARGARET
Oh, really. How do you figure? Men don't have babies.

JOEY
If you didn't have men who would drive the ladies to the hospital?

DENNIS
Good one, Joey.

(CONTINUED)

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61 CONTINUED: (2) 61

JOEY
Thanks.

MARGARET
They would take cabs.

The kids reach the tree house.

JOEY
There's other stuff that men do.

MARGARET
With having babies? Like what?

JOEY
They call the relatives and tell them it happened.

MARGARET
Big deal.

DENNIS
The most important thing is they marry the women. Then the women can go down and get the baby.

MARGARET
The baby is in her stomach.

DENNIS
She has to get it installed. Her stomach isn't just filled up with babies.

MARGARET
Who installs them?

DENNIS
A minister and a doctor.

MARGARET
How?

DENNIS
How?

He looks at Joey. He laughs. Joey laughs.

JOEY
She wants to know how.

They break up.

(CONTINUED)

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61 CONTINUED: (3) 61

MARGARET
Tell me, Dennis. How?

DENNIS
The bellybutton. It opens up.

MARGARET
Huh, uh.

DENNIS
Not kids' bellybuttons. After a woman gets married, it starts to open up.

MARGARET
That's not true.

JOEY
Yep.

MARGARET
Howcome men have them?

DENNIS
So they don't look weird in bathing suits.

MARGARET
You made all that up.

DENNIS
It's true. I heard it from a guy in the second grade.

MARGARET
You swear?

DENNIS
Cross my heart.

MARGARET
What happens if you're swimming and your bellybutton opens?

DENNIS
I guess you sink. That's why moms never go in the water.

He starts up the tree house ladder. Joey and Margaret follow.

62 ECU. JOEY'S FINGERS. MORNING 62

Holding a nail to a board.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

62 CONTINUED: 62

INT. TREE HOUSE

Joey's wincing, holding the nail. Dennis holds a hammer high over his head. Margaret is trying to saw a board.

CU. DENNIS

Tongue planted in the corner of his mouth, he takes aim.

DENNIS
Okay, on the count of three, move your hand. One...two...THREE!

Dennis brings the hammer down.

CU. JOEY

He pulls his hand away.

ECU. NAIL

The hammer mashes it into the wood.

63 EXT. WOODS. TREE HOUSE. MORNING 63

The kids continue working. The MUSIC TURNS DARK. CAMERA BOOMS DOWN the tree to Switchblade Sam. He turns his eyes up to the tree house. A beat and he looks down.

HIS POV

Margaret's stroller and doll, Baby Louise. The switchblade COMES INTO FRAME and hooks Baby Louise's sleeve. The doll is slowly lifted out of the stroller.

64 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING. DAY 64

Downtown. A clean, new, modern building.

DN9200103

65 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY 65

Alice is in a meeting with a dozen MEN and WOMEN. A middle-aged MAN is addressing the assembly referring to a large schematic of a shopping mall.

MAN
By July we'll be 90% rented on the ground level, 60% on the second level and 20% on the top level. The problem we need to address is the low level of interest in the upper level space. (X) (X) (X)

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

Alice raises her hand.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

65 CONTINUED: (2) 65

MAN
Mitchell?

ALICE
You have a toy store on the first floor.

MAN
Correct.

ALICE
You have a lot of traffic on the first floor because the big department stores are there. There's interest in the second level because that's where the restaurants are. We need something to draw traffic to the third level. Right? (X)

A grim, serious, young woman, ANDREA, makes a sour face at Alice. (X)

ANDREA
Is there an echo in here? (X)

ALICE
Excuse me? (X)

ANDREA
We know all this. (X)

ALICE
I'm sorry. I was just setting up what I was going to say. It's about the toy store on the first level. I know that you all know that there is a toy store on the first level. My suggestion is that you give the toy store six months free rent to move to the top level. (X)

There is no reaction from the Man. Slowly the others turn and look at Alice like she's lost her mind. (X)

ALICE
When I go to the mall with my little boy, I can't get out unless we stop at the toy store. He knows he's not going to get anything unless it's a special occasion but like every kid he wants to go in and look around... (X)

ANDREA
Spare us the family anecdotes, please.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

65 CONTINUED: (3) 65

Alice is tempted to back off.

ALICE
Do you have children?

ANDREA
No. I want to be able to wear a bathing suit as long as I can.
(turns away, to Man)
Can we go on? She's not making any sense.

ALICE
I'm not finished.

ANDREA
Last week you were making peanut butter sandwiches and wiping runny noses. Now you think you know how to sell retail space.

(CONTINUED)

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65 CONTINUED: (4) 65

ALICE
There's always a lot of traffic in toy stores. If people go up to the third level to visit the toy store, they'll go through the other levels to get there. That's apparent to anyone with kids and you have to assume, maybe, that potential tenants might have kids and would know that and it might entice them to take space on the upper levels. That's all I'm saying. (X)

MAN
Interesting point. Thank you.
(continues)
Let's go on.

DN92007063

CU. ALICE

She feels foolish and out of place. She shrinks in her seat.

66 EXT. WOODS. TREE HOUSE. DAY 66

The holes in the walls have been patched. The vines have been pulled away. There is a noticeable improvement. (X)

EXT. WOODS. DENNIS AND JOEY

They're dirty and sweaty, looking up proudly at the tree house.

DENNIS
We did a pretty good job. Rain won't get in now even if it rains sideways or upside down.

JOEY
How about a little paint?

DENNIS
Couldn't hurt.

JOEY
You got any?

DENNIS
My dad does.

CU. MARGARET

She's staring with a slack jaw and big eyes.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

HER POV

The baby stroller. Baby Louise is gone.

EXT. WOODS. TREE

Margaret turns from the stroller. She marches over to Joey, (X) grabs the front of his shirt, and pulls him to her. (X)

(CONTINUED)

DN9200102

66 CONTINUED: (2) 66

MARGARET
Gimme my doll, you jerk!

JOEY
I don't have it! (X)

She pushes Joey away and turns angrily to Dennis. (X)

MARGARET
Give it to me, Dennis.

DENNIS
I didn't take your doll!

MARGARET
It's not here! Somebody took it!

JOEY
Not us. We've been with you.

MARGARET
You guys swear you didn't take it?

DENNIS
Yup.

MARGARET
(gasps)
I've been robbed!

DN9200103

66A EXT. RAILROAD BRIDGE. DAY 66A (

Switchblade Sam is perched on the bridge embankment. He's holding the doll. He looks at it with a grin and slips it into his duffel bag. He shoves the bag into the underbrush and stands. He looks down to the creek. (X) (X) (X) (X)

HIS POV (X)

Dennis and Joey lead the way back, passing under the bridge. Margaret trudges behind, upset, stunned. (X) (X)

67 EXT. WOODS. DAY 67 (

The kids head home through the woods. (X)

DENNIS
You can't tell your mom you lost your doll.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 67

MARGARET
I have to tell someone grown-up. I can't hold this in, I'll develop mental problems later in my life.

DENNIS (X)
If you tell your mom, she'll know we were in the woods and we're not supposed to go there.

(CONTINUED)

DN92001063

67 CONTINUED: (2) 67

JOEY (X)
Grownups don't understand woods. (X)

MARGARET
I've had Baby Louise since I was born. (X)
My grandmother gave her to me. I'm (X)
supposed to save her and give her to my
daughter when I grow one.

DENNIS
Tell your mom Baby Louise fell in the (X)
sewer and got washed away to the ocean.

MARGARET
I can't lie to my mother. (X)

DENNIS (X)
(thinks for a moment) (X)
Okay. We'll do it. (X)

67A EXT. WOODS. WIDE. DAY 67A (:

As Dennis, Joey, and Margaret CLEAR FRAME, Switchblade Sam (X)
enters. He's following them. (X)

68 INT. WADE HOUSE. BATHROOM. DAY 68

Mrs. Wade is taking a shower. (X)

DN9200103

CU. MRS. WADE

She rinses her hair and face and turns off the water.

INT. BATHROOM. SHOWER

Mrs. Wade starts to open the shower curtain.

INT. TUB. OTHER SIDE OF THE CURTAIN

It slides open to reveal Dennis and Joey standing at the edge of the tub, their hands in their pockets.

DENNIS
Guess what happened to Margaret's doll!

CU. MRS. WADE

She SCREAMS and whips the curtain closed.

CU. DENNIS AND JOEY

They look at each other, puzzled.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 68

JOEY
Maybe she gots her bellybutton open.

69 CU. BOOTS. DAY 69

Switchblade Sam's boots shuffle down the sidewalk. CAMERA BOOMS UP his filthy frame to his face. A cigarette end dangles from his lower lip. (X) (X)

70 EXT. BACKYARD. SWING-SET. DAY 70

Gunther is sitting on a swing eating an apple. He's wearing only shorts. A shadow passes over him. (X) (X)

CU. GUNTHER

He looks to the ground.

DN9200103

HIS POV

An ominous, elongated shadow of a man moves across his lawn. (X)

CU. GUNTHER. FROM BEHIND

He looks over his shoulder. He's frightened.

HIS POV. UP ANGLE

Switchblade Sam is standing at the back fence, looming over Gunther. He flips his cigarette away and smiles. (X) (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Whatcha eatin' there, sport?

CU. GUNTHER

He holds up his apple.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 70

GUNTHER
(cautious)
A apple.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He brings his knife INTO FRAME. The blade snaps out.

INSERT: APPLE

The knife stabs the apple.

EXT. BACKYARD. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He pulls the apple off the knife and bites into it. He winks his approval. (X)

CU. GUNTHER

He's frozen with fear.

DN9200103

71 OMITTED 71 (X)

71A EXT. ALLEY. DAY 71A (:

Switchblade Sam continues down the alley, eating the apple. (X)

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

He studies the back gardens as he strolls. (X)

HIS POV (X)

An open back door. (X)

CU. SAM (X)

He notes the open door and looks across the alley... (X)

HIS POV (X)

An open window, curtains out and fluttering in the breeze. (X)

CU. SAM (X)

He grins. (X)

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71B INT. HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 71B (:

An antique clock is sitting on a table at the window. (X)
Switchblade Sam appears outside the window. He peers inside. (X)

72 EXT. MITCHELL'S STREET. DUSK 72 (:

A tired summer sun is setting behind the houses.

73 INT. MITCHELL GARAGE. PAINT SHELF. DUSK 73

A wooden shelf with half-a-dozen used cans of paint. Dennis' dirty hands pluck a can off the shelf.

INT. GARAGE

Dennis shakes the can. Empty. He shakes another. Not enough to bother with. He shakes a third can. The lid flies off, a wave of brown house paint slops out and splatters on the garage floor. (X)

DENNIS
Whoops.

74 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. FOYER. FRONT DOOR. DUSK 74

It opens on a teenage girl, POLLY. She's carrying a football helmet. She smiles. (X) (X)

POLLY
Hi, Mr. Mitchell.

INT. FOYER

Henry steps back to let Polly in.

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HENRY
Hello, Polly. Come on in. What's the helmet for?

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: 74

POLLY
My girlfriend used to baby-sit for Dennis. She said bring a helmet and wear pants.

75 INT. GARAGE. DUSK 75

Dennis is vacuuming up the paint with a shop vac. (X)

76 OMITTED 76 (X)

77 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. DUSK 77

Henry's car backs out of the driveway.

78 EXT. GARAGE. SIDE DOOR. DUSK 78

Dennis wheels the paint-smeared shop vac into the yard. He (X)
points the nozzle into a bushel basket half-filled with dried (X)
yard clippings. He shakes the hose. A few drops of paint (X)
dribble into the basket. He reaches around the vacuum... (X)

INSERT: SWITCH

It controls the air flow. Dennis switches it from IN to OUT.

(CONTINUED)

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78 CONTINUED: 78

CU. NOZZLE (X)

As Dennis has leaned over the vacuum, the nozzle is no longer pointed into the basket. It's pointed UP. (X) (X)

EXT. YARD (X)

There's a rapid build-up of pressure and an explosion of paint and sawdust. A quick, violent ejaculation. (X) (X)

CU. DENNIS

He looks up.

HIS POV

The mass of sawdust and paint is still ascending.

CU. DENNIS

He looks to Wilson's house.

HIS POV

Through the bushes, he sees Wilson putting two chicken breasts on the grill. He looks up, winces and takes off.

DN9200103

79 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN. DUSK 79

Dennis runs into the kitchen and slams the door.

80 EXT. SKY. DUSK 80

The blob arcs and falls.

81 EXT. WILSON'S PATIO. DUSK 81

Wilson bends down to retrieve the barbecue lid. The blob slams down on the grill. Wilson, unaware that his dinner has been hit, covers the grill and goes into the house.

82 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. FOYER. FRONT DOOR. DUSK 82

It opens on a teenage boy, MICKEY.

MICKEY
I'm looking for Polly.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: 82

CU. DENNIS

Looking up.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

82 CONTINUED: (2) 82

DENNIS
She's up in my mom's bathroom using the armpit perfume because she said you're such a stud she gets nervous and sweats a lot. (X) (X)

83 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PATIO. DUSK 83

George is chewing slowly. Martha's looking curiously at the piece of chicken on her fork.

GEORGE
Tastes like paint.
(chews)
And wood.

Martha drops her fork.

MARTHA
(picking up the dinner plates)
I'll make us some sandwiches.

George glances across at Dennis' house.

DN9200103

84 INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT. LATER 84

Dennis is sitting in the tub, almost buried in the bubbles. Mickey's sitting on the closed toilet seat with a children's book. He's reading it. With difficulty.

MICKEY
"Do not cry, little lo-co-mo-tive," said Old Engine Number 99. "When you grow up you will be pulling many, many cars."
(to Dennis)
How can a train grow?

DENNIS
He eats all his coal and gets plenty of sleep.

MICKEY
Yeah, right. What's the point of reading lies?

DENNIS
It teaches kids to eat all their food and go to bed when they're supposed to and not cry when mean cabooses and boxcars make fun of you.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: 84

MICKEY
This is stupid. You ready to get outta there and go to bed?

DENNIS
I haven't played submarine, I haven't knocked all my guys in the water and rescued them. I haven't cleaned any of my dirty parts.

He looks at his hands. He shows them to Mickey.

DENNIS
I'm not even wrinkled-up yet. Keep reading.

MICKEY
(sighs)
One day Old Engine Number 99 left the station very, very early...

DENNIS
You skipped a whole bunch. You went right to the end. Go back.

Mickey flips back to where he really left off.

MICKEY
"I will never be big e-nough to pull anything," sobbed the little red lo-co-mo-tive.

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85 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. STREET LAMP. NIGHT 85

It pops on.

86 INT. DENNIS' ROOM. NIGHT. LATER 86

Dennis is in bed, wide-awake, holding his teddy bear.

87 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PATIO. NIGHT 87

Wilson comes out the back door. Martha follows.

MARTHA
Where're you going?

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: 87

WILSON
I'm going to investigate Mitchell's garage. Dennis was fooling around with paint. I know it and I'm going to prove it. (X)

Wilson heads down his driveway.

CU. MARTHA

She remains in the doorway. She's annoyed.

MARTHA
Aren't you taking this a bit far, George?
(pause)
He's only a boy.

88 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 88

Polly and Mickey are on the couch. The lights are out.

INT. HOUSE. FOYER

Dennis sneaks down the stairs. He peeks into the living room.

HIS POV

Polly and Mickey making out.

89 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. FRONT PORCH. NIGHT 89

Dennis sneaks out the door. (X)

90 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. GARAGE. NIGHT 90 (

Wilson peeks around the garage. He scans the yard. (X)

HIS POV. MOVING (X)

A patch of worn lawn, overgrown rose bush, limp tomato plants, (X)
doghouse, toys. Tree with a tire swing and along the fence a (X)
sandpit. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He turns up his nose at the gruesome sight. (X)

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91 CU. DOORBELL. NIGHT 91

Dennis' finger pushes it.

92 INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 92

Polly jumps up from the sofa.

DN9200103

93 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. NIGHT 93

Dennis is crouched down in front of the bushes off the side of the porch. Behind him, the living room lights go on.

EXT. FRONT DOOR

Polly opens the door.

POLLY
Hello?

HER POV

Nothing. Sidewalk.

94 EXT. MITCHELL BACKYARD. NIGHT 94

Wilson sneaks across the yard.

CU. CROQUET WICKET

Wilson catches his foot in the wicket.

EXT. BACKYARD. WILSON

He stumbles, loses his balance, and steps on the edge of Dennis' inflatable wading pool.

INSERT: WADING POOL

Wilson's shoe holds down the inflated edge of the pool. Water flows over his ankle and shoe.

CU. WILSON

Furious as he looks down at his foot.

WILSON
Darn!

95 INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 95

Polly walks back in.

POLLY
Kids.

She turns off the lights and returns to the sofa.

96 EXT. HOUSE. DENNIS. NIGHT 96

He peeks over the bushes and sees that the lights are off.

(CONTINUED)

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96 CONTINUED: 96

CU. DENNIS

He laughs to himself.

97 EXT. BACKYARD. NIGHT 97

Wilson hops on one leg as he shakes the water off his foot.

INSERT: LAWN

A bike horn with a rubber squeeze bulb is lying on the grass.

EXT. BACKYARD

Wilson hops on the squeeze bulb. The horn honks.

98 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 98

Ruff, asleep on the kitchen floor, HEARS THE HORN. He growls.

99 EXT. BACKYARD. NIGHT

Wilson takes off his shoe and peels off his sock.

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. KITCHEN DOOR

Ruff blasts out of the doggie door.

CU. WILSON

He looks over his shoulder as he HEARS RUFF'S APPROACH.

EXT. BACKYARD. WILSON

He takes off down the yard with Ruff in pursuit. He leaps for the tire swing, grabs it, swings violently forward...

INSERT: SWING ROPE

The rope holding the swing to the branch SNAPS!

EXT. BACKYARD

Wilson, his feet in the tire, hands holding the loose rope, lands on his back in Dennis' sandbox. (X) (X)

100 OMITTED 100 (X)

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101 INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 101

The DOORBELL RINGS and Polly jumps up again. (X)

102 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. NIGHT 102

Dennis crouches in the bushes. The living room light goes on.

103 EXT. BACKYARD. NIGHT 103

Wilson lies in the sandbox MOANING. Ruff stands over him, nuzzling him affectionately.

WILSON
Get away! Go on! Shoo!

104 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. PORCH. NIGHT 104

Polly whips the front door open.

POLLY
KNOCK IT OFF! (X)

CU. DENNIS

He has his hand over his mouth to keep from making noise. He's in hysterics.

105 EXT. BACKYARD. WILSON. NIGHT 105

He limps to the garage.

106 EXT. BACKYARD. RUFF. NIGHT 106

Ruff's sniffing the shoe Wilson took off.

DN9200103

107 INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 107

Polly switches off the light and returns to her romance.

108 INSERT: DOORBELL. NIGHT 108

Dennis rings the bell again.

109 INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 109

Polly and Mickey sit up.

MICKEY
That's it.

110 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. DENNIS. NIGHT 110

He waits for the door to open. He peeks around the bushes. (X)

HIS POV

The porch and the closed front door.

CU. DENNIS

He's puzzled.

111 INT. MITCHELL KITCHEN. NIGHT 111

Ruff is gnawing on Wilson's shoe.

112 INT. GARAGE. NIGHT 112

Wilson sneaks into the garage and flips on the light.

113 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 113

Polly rummages through a drawer. She finds a roll of tape. (X)

114 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. BASEMENT. NIGHT 114

Mickey finds a box of carpet tacks.

115 INSERT: DOORBELL. NIGHT 115

Dennis holds his finger on the bell.

116 INT. GARAGE. NIGHT 116

Wilson examines the paint on the garage floor. He spots...

HIS POV

The shop vac.

DN9200103

117 INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM. NIGHT 117

Polly fills a plastic mop bucket with water from the tub. She squirts a hefty amount of bath bubbles in it.

118 INT. GARAGE. NIGHT 118

Wilson examines the shop vac hose. He sniffs it. Smells like paint. He drops the nozzle.

INSERT: NOZZLE

It falls next to an old, scuffed golf ball.

INT. GARAGE. WILSON

He bends over the shop vac and throws the "on" switch.

INSERT: NOZZLE

It sucks in the golf ball. The suction moves the hose between Wilson's legs.

INT. GARAGE. WILSON. UP ANGLE

Wilson's legs straddling the hose. (X)

INT. GARAGE

Wilson crouches down, inadvertently positioning himself over the nozzle.

INSERT: SHOP VAC SWITCH

Wilson switches it from IN to OUT.

INSERT: HOSE NOZZLE

A beat and POW! The vacuum spits out the golf ball.

CU. WILSON

His eyes bulge in shock.

EXT. GARAGE

O.S. WILSON SCREAMS IN AGONY.

DN9200103

119 INT. MITCHELL KITCHEN. NIGHT 119

Mickey grabs the flour canister on his way through.

120 EXT. BACKYARD. NIGHT 120

Wilson stumbles out of the garage. He's limping and MOANING. He looks like the Hunchback of Notre Dame.

121 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 121

Mickey turns off the living room lights, steps back into the foyer. He turns off the foyer lights.

MICKEY
I GUESS THOSE KIDS TOOK OFF!

122 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. PORCH. NIGHT 122 (:

Dennis creeps up onto the porch. He freezes and looks to...

HIS POV

Wilson, deep in shadow, comes around the side of the house, hunched-over, head hung, limping, GROANING, breathing hard.

CU. DENNIS

A look of absolute horror. He doesn't recognize Wilson.

EXT. PORCH

Dennis leaps off the porch and runs around the other side of the house.

123 EXT. SIDE YARD. NIGHT 123

Dennis runs full speed to the backyard.

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124 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. NIGHT 124

Wilson hobbles up the porch steps.

WILSON
I got him this time. Mitchell can't deny it.

125 EXT. HOUSE. BACK PORCH. NIGHT 125

Dennis runs into the kitchen and locks the door.

126 EXT. PORCH. CU. WILSON. NIGHT 126

He catches his breath and reaches out for the doorbell.

INSERT: DOORBELL

Wilson's thumb comes down on a tack taped to the button.

CU. WILSON

He throws back his head and BELLOWS.

127 EXT. HOUSE. BATHROOM WINDOW. NIGHT 127 (X)

Polly yanks open the window.

128 CU. WILSON. NIGHT 128

He holds his thumb and HOWLS.

DN9200103

129 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. FRONT DOOR. NIGHT 129

It opens on Wilson sucking his thumb, eyes shut, MOANING.

REVERSE

Mickey heaves the contents of the flour canister at Wilson.

EXT. HOUSE. BATHROOM WINDOW

Polly dumps the bucket from the bathroom window.

CU. WILSON

Covered with flour and soapy water, thumb in his mouth. (X)

130 OMITTED 130 (X)

131 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. NIGHT. LATER 131 (:

Henry's car is in the drive.

132 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 132

Henry and Alice enter. They stop suddenly...

INT. FOYER. STAIRS

Polly's sitting on the bottom stair wearing her helmet and holding an ice-filled washcloth to her wrist. Her pants are torn, her knee's bloody, her shoes are off. (X) (X) (X)

CU. ALICE

She's worried.

ALICE
Where's Dennis?!

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INT. FOYER. POLLY

She listlessly points upstairs with a bandaged finger.

POLLY (X)
I had him tied up for awhile but he got loose. (X) (X)

Alice heads up the stairs. Henry hangs back for a moment. (X)

HENRY (X)
If the rope's too thick, he can just wiggle out. (X) (X)

He heads upstairs. (X)

133 INT. HALLWAY. DENNIS' DOOR. NIGHT 133

It swings open on a large airline dog cage in the middle of the room. A beat and Dennis' face appears in the mesh door.

DENNIS
I think we're gonna need to find a new baby-sitter. This one can't take a joke.

134 INT. WILSON'S BEDROOM. FLOOR. MORNING 134

Morning sun falls on Wilson's shoes. One is clean and shiny. The other is horribly chewed-up. (X) (X)

135 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. MORNING 135

Dennis comes out the door and crosses to the Wilson house. He's carrying a folded piece of craft paper.

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136 INT. WILSON HOUSE. KITCHEN. MORNING 136

Mrs. Wilson is making breakfast. Dennis peeks in through the screen door.

DENNIS
Hi, Mrs. Wilson. Is Mr. Wilson up?

MRS. WILSON
Not yet, dear.

DENNIS
How long do you think he's gonna sleep for?

Mrs. Wilson opens the screen door. Dennis steps inside.

MRS. WILSON
Not too much longer. He's having his picture taken this morning.

DENNIS
For what?

MRS. WILSON
For the newspaper.

DENNIS
Did he get arrested?

MRS. WILSON
He's being honored for his garden.

DENNIS
Do you think he'd get mad if I went upstairs?

MRS. WILSON
What do you want to go upstairs for? (X)

DENNIS
I made him an "I'm Sorry Ruff Chewed Up Your Shoe That You Had Since The Good Old Days" card.

MRS. WILSON
That's very nice, Dennis. I'm sure Mr. Wilson'll appreciate it.

(CONTINUED)

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136 CONTINUED: 136

DENNIS
I'm kind of busy today so I won't have a chance to give it to him. I have to go to Margaret's house because we're getting poor and my mom's got a job now. Could I put just it up by his whisker cutter so he'll see it as soon as he gets up? That's where I put my dad's sorry cards. It's a good time to say you're sorry because grown-up guys are happy when they wake up. My dad's so happy in the morning, he whistles when he goes to the bathroom. The only time he's not happy in the morning is on Sunday when he and my mom wrestle. They kind of like to be alone when they do that. I think it's because they take their shirts off and... (X)

Mrs. Wilson cuts him off.

MRS. WILSON
You can go up if you promise not to disturb Mr. Wilson.

DENNIS
I promise.

He starts for the dining room, stops, turns...

DENNIS
You know what? You're the nicest old gal on the block.

137 INT. WILSON'S ROOM. MORNING 137

Wilson's in bed, sawing wood. Dennis tiptoes across the room. Wilson stops snoring. Dennis freezes. A beat, and Wilson resumes his snoring. Dennis crosses into the bathroom.

138 INT. BATHROOM. MORNING 138

Dennis sets his note on the bathroom sink. He turns to exit. He stops. A long beat and he turns back.

HIS POV

Wilson's dentures are on the sink. CAMERA PUSHES IN on them. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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138 CONTINUED: 138

CU. DENNIS

He eyes the dentures hungrily. He glances over his shoulder to (X)
the door. He listens to Wilson SNORING.

CU. DENNIS' HAND

His fingers are twitching.

CU. DENTURES

Dennis picks up the two plates.

INT. BATHROOM

Dennis examines the dentures. He holds them up to his mouth,
opens and closes them. He speaks softly.

DENNIS
Hello. I'm Dennis. These are my new
teeth.
(pause)
I'm the doctor. Open your mouth and
say, ahh!

He opens the dentures, sticks his tongue between the two plates,
and wiggles it.

DENNIS
Ahh...

Another idea hits him. He growls like a tiger and snaps the two
plates together. The two front teeth break off.

CU. SINK. DRAIN

The teeth bounce around the sink and tumble down the drain.

CU. DENNIS

He stares frightfully at the damaged dentures.

DENNIS
Oh, no... (X)

139 thru 140 OMITTED 139 (X) thru 140 (X)

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141 INT. DENNIS' ROOM. MORNING 141 (

FROM UNDER THE BED. Dennis lifts the bedspread, reaches under (X)
the bed and pulls out a toy chest. (X)

CU. TOY CHEST (X)

Dennis open it. Inside is a treasure chest. He unlocks it. (X)
Inside is a bank. He works the combination lock on the bank. (X)
He opens the door... (X)

INSERT: BANK

Inside is a Milky Way, a snack-size box of Milk Duds, a penknife, a feather, a dollar, two pennies, an old watch and the object of his search -- a mini-pack of Chiclets.

142 INT. ROOM. MORNING 142

Dennis is at his little desk, hunched over the dentures.

INSERT: DENTURES

Dennis is applying Elmer's Glue to the spot where the denture teeth were knocked out. He carefully fits a white Chiclet into the glued gums. CAMERA MOVES OFF the dentures to the newspaper (X)
Dennis is working over. A headline reads -- ROBBER ROBS ROBERTS (X)
ROAD RESIDENCE. (X)

143 OMITTED 143 (X)

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144 INT. WILSON HOUSE. FOYER. MORNING. LATER 144

A PHOTOGRAPHER is at the screen door. He RINGS THE BELL.

145 CU. WILSON. MORNING 145

Sound asleep. His eyes pop open. He looks at...

HIS POV

The alarm clock. It reads in big numerals -- 9:00.

146 INT. FOYER. MORNING 146

Mrs. Wilson has let the Photographer in. She stands at the bottom of the stairs.

MARTHA
George? Are you ready? The photographer's here!

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147 INT. BEDROOM. MORNING 147

Wilson whips the covers off, jumps out of bed and runs for the (X) bathroom.

148 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. GARDEN. MORNING 148

The Photographer has set up his tripod and camera and is waiting impatiently. Mrs. Wilson is keeping him company.

PHOTOGRAPHER
I got a nine-thirty, ma'am.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED: 148

MRS. WILSON
He'll be out any second.

149 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. BACK DOOR. MORNING 149

Wilson rushes out. He's fiddling with his dentures.

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. GARDEN

Wilson rushes down the path to the pavilion. When he speaks, he lisps slightly.

WILSON
Morning. Sorry.

He buttons his suit coat. Martha fixes his lapels.

WILSON
It's fine, Martha. Leave it alone.

CU. MARTHA

She's puzzled by his voice.

MARTHA
George?

EXT. GARDEN

Wilson shoos her away.

WILSON
Move it. You're in the picture.

She backs away.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Half a step to your right, please.

EXT. GARDEN (X)

Wilson moves slightly.

HIS POV

The Photographer, bent over his camera, and Martha with a bewildered look on her face.

PHOTOGRAPHER
That's good. Gimme a smile!

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

149 CONTINUED: 149

CU. WILSON

He grins, revealing two big, white Chiclets for front teeth.

CU. MRS. WILSON

She gasps in alarm.

CU. WILSON

He holds his goofy, grotesque smile. A FLASH GOES OFF.

149A EXT. PARK. CU. STATUE. DAY 149A (:

The bronze face of a young, fallen soldier. A Diamond Blue Tip match scrapes across the soldier's forehead and ignites. (X)

EXT. PARK. STATUE (X)

Switchblade Sam lights a cigarette butt with the match. We see that the war memorial statue is of the fallen soldier being carried by a fellow soldier. Switchblade Sam flips the match away and puffs on his cigarette as he studies the park. (X)

HIS POV (X)

A group of TEENAGE GIRLS are tending a collection of BABIES and TODDLERS on the park lawn. They are ringed by baby buggies and strollers. (X)

CU. STROLLER (X)

A Girl's purse hangs on a stroller handle. (X)

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

Smoke curls up from the butt as he spies the purse. He grins. The grin freezes as he sees... (X)

EXT. PARK. CU. GUNTHER (X)

He stands up out of the ring of Toddlers as he spots Switchblade Sam. (X)

EXT. PARK. STREET. POLICE CAR (X)

Pulls up to the curb. (X)

INT. POLICE CAR (X)

The portly CHIEF OF POLICE peers ahead suspiciously. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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149A CONTINUED: 149A (:

CU. SAM (X)

His eyes shift from the kids and strollers to... (X)

HIS POV (X)

The Chief calls out the open squad car window. (X)

CHIEF (X)
Hey! You! Come here! (X)

EXT. PARK. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

Switchblade Sam picks up his folded coat. He reaches into his (X)
pocket and locates his knife. He lifts it out a little, checks (X)
it, lets it slide back and starts for the cop car. He's (X)
cautious but not overly concerned. He glances down. (X)

CU. GUNTHER. MOVING (X)

Looking up in fright. (X)

CU. SAM. MOVING (X)

He puts his finger to his lips to insure Gunther's silence. (X)

CU. GUNTHER (X)

He steps away, too scared to speak. He turns and runs. (X)

CU. STROLLER HANDLE. PURSE (X)

As Switchblade Sam passes, his coat sweeps over the stroller. (X)

EXT. PARK. STREET (X)

The Chief gets out of the car. Switchblade Sam approaches. (X)

CHIEF (X)
I don't believe I've seen you around (X)
here. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
Maybe that's 'cause I ain't never been (X)
around here. (X)

CHIEF (X)
What're you up to? (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
What's it to ya? (X)

(CONTINUED)

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149A CONTINUED: (2) 149A (:

CHIEF (X)
I run a real, nice, clean town. I (X)
don't want any trouble. My advice to (X)
you is, follow the sun on outta here. (X)

Switchblade Sam steps up close to the Chief. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
Times have changed, Officer. I ain't (X)
somebody you can run outta town on a (X)
rail. I ain't no bum, I'm an oppressed (X)
man. You mess with me, you better have (X)
a good, lawful reason. (X)

CHIEF (X)
We have a vagrancy ordinance. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
The only reason I ain't moving on is (X)
you stopped to give me the breeze. (X)
(pause) (X)
Take a good look at my face. You'll be (X)
a real lucky cop if you ever see it (X)
again. (X)

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

The arrogant smile fades leaving his face cold and evil. (X)

CU. CHIEF (X)

He backs down. (X)

EXT. PARK. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

Switchblade Sam heads across the street, leaving the Chief (X)
standing helpless at his squad car. (X)

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

His grin returns as he looks down at his coat. (X)

INSERT: SAM'S COAT (X)

Folded under his arm. A stolen purse is wrapped in the coat. (X)

149B EXT. WOODS. TREE. CU. PAINT BUCKET. DAY 149B (:

An empty bucket of blue house paint. CAMERA PANS to an empty (X)
bucket of red paint, then to an empty bucket of white paint. (X)
CAMERA PULLS BACK and BOOMS UP to the tree house. CAMERA PUSHES (X)
IN on the window. The kids are looking out. They're covered (X)
with paint. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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149B CONTINUED: 149B (:

DENNIS (X)
We did a pretty good job. (X)

JOEY (X)
Uh, huh. (X)

MARGARET (X)
I think we're ready to order furniture (X)
and major appliances. (X)

EXT. WOODS. TREE HOUSE (X)

One side is blue, one red, the rest white. It's sloppy but (X)
fresh and bright. (X)

150 thru 152 OMITTED 150 (X) thru (X) 152

153 INT. ALICE'S OFFICE. DAY 153

She's sitting behind the desk in her cubicle. She's doing paperwork. A beat and she glances up.

HER POV

Andrea is standing in her doorway.

ANDREA
Hi, Mom.

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(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED: 153

CU. ALICE

She forces a polite smile.

ALICE
Good morning.

INT. OFFICE

Andrea walks in and crosses to Alice's desk. She picks up a photo of Dennis from the desk.

ANDREA
Your son?

Alice nods.

ANDREA
Cute. Just as I imagined. Blond.

Alice leans back in her chair. She doesn't like the remark.

ANDREA
I hear you begged off the trip to Oklahoma City.

ALICE
I asked that it be rescheduled.

ANDREA
You have a Cub Scout meeting or something?

ALICE
My husband has a trip at the same time. His was scheduled before mine.

ANDREA
Sure.

ALICE
Do you have to be so confrontational?

ANDREA
Am I being confrontational?

ALICE
I think so.

ANDREA
You have my apology.

She sets the photo down on the desk.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

153 CONTINUED: (2) 153

ANDREA
If you and your husband travel at the same time, there's no one to watch your son? Is that the problem?

ALICE
It's not a problem per se.

ANDREA
Oh, good. Because if you want to blow off your trip, I have to cover for you. And I have plans I can't break. I don't have kids but I do have a life. I'm sorry but I'm not going to be able to help you.

She crosses back to the door.

ANDREA
I admire you, Alice. You have it all.

She exits.

CU. ALICE

She lets out a long, angry breath. MUSIC COMES UP.

153A INSERT: ALICE'S ADDRESS BOOK. DAY 153A (:

A pocket address book opens to the first section -- ABC. (X)

154 CU. ELDERLY WOMAN. DAY 154

She's on the phone. She shakes her head, no.

155 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. CU. ALICE. DAY 155

Dialing the phone.

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156 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 156

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN covering a phone, looking at her TEENAGE DAUGHTER. The teenager shakes her head, no.

156A INSERT: ADDRESS BOOK. DAY 156A (:

Turns to section -- GHI. (X)

157 CU. LIST OF BABY-SITTERS. DAY 157

Another name is scratched off.

158 CU. HENRY. DAY 158

He's on the phone smiling obsequiously.

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159 CU. TEENAGE GIRL. DAY 159

She laughs and hangs up.

160 CU. ALICE. DAY 160

She holds the phone away from her ear as the party on the other end screams at her.

160A INSERT: ADDRESS BOOK. DAY 160A (:

Section -- MNO. (X)

161 OMITTED 161 (X)

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162 CU. MOM. DAY 162

A friendly head shake.

163 CU. ANOTHER ELDERLY WOMAN. DAY 163

She angrily slams her phone down. Her arm is in a cast.

164 CU. TEENAGE GIRL. DAY 164

She has a black eye. She slams the phone down.

165 CU. TEENAGE BOY. DAY 165

He's on crutches. He slams the phone down.

166 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. DAY 166

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, leg in a cast, hangs up angrily.

166A INSERT: ADDRESS BOOK. DAY 166A (:

Turns to TUV. (X)

167 CU. ALICE. DAY 167

Weary and tired. She dials another number.

168 CU. WALL PHONE. DAY 168

Hangs up.

169 CU. NOVELTY PHONE. DAY 169

Hangs up.

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170 CU. CAR PHONE. DAY 170

Hangs up.

171 CU. HENRY. DAY 171

He tears the baby-sitter sheet out of the phone directory and crumples it up. He tosses it over his shoulder.

172 CU. ALICE. DAY 172

She slowly hangs up the phone. She wearily turns a page in her address book. (X) (X)

172A INSERT: ADDRESS BOOK. DAY 172A (X)

The last section of the book -- WXYZ. She flips to W. (X)

CU. ALICE (X)

She looks from the book to... (X)

CU. HENRY (X)

Standing in the doorway. He's beat. (X)

CU. ALICE (X)

She looks back at the book. (X)

INSERT: ADDRESS BOOK (X)

CAMERA PUSHES IN on "WILSON, GEORGE AND MARTHA..." MUSIC ENDS. (X)

173 thru 175 OMITTED 173 thru 175 (X) (X)

DN9200103

176 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. FRONT PORCH. MORNING. DAY 176 (:

Wilson is on the porch holding open the newspaper. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He's staring in shock. (X)

CU. NEWSPAPER (X)

The GARDEN SECTION and the photo of Wilson. Big, buck teeth. (X)
He looks like the village idiot. O.S. we HEAR... (X)

DENNIS (O.S.) (X)
HEY! MR. WILSON! (X)

The newspaper is slowly lowered to reveal Dennis, Henry and (X)
Alice walking up the sidewalk. Dennis is carrying a jar of (X)
grasshoppers, a milk carton full of mud, a baseball glove, and (X)
his teddy bear. Henry's carrying Dennis' suitcase. Alice is (X)
carrying his pillow. Alice and Henry are dressed for business. (X)

DENNIS (X)
I'm sleeping at your joint! (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

A weary, forced grin. (X)

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EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PORCH (X)

Wilson folds the paper under his arm. Martha's all smiles. (X)
Dennis climbs the porch. Alice and Henry follow. (X)

DENNIS (X)
(to Wilson) (X)
I brought you some grasshoppers.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED: 176

GEORGE
You shouldn't have.

ALICE
Thank you so much, Martha. George.

MARTHA (X)
It's our pleasure. (X)

HENRY
You saved our lives.

GEORGE
(under his breath) (X)
Save two, lose one.

DENNIS
Ruff's staying home because he could (X)
get excited and bust up your place and (X)
plus he leaves hairs all over (X)
everything. (X)

ALICE
I'll call when I arrive. You have our numbers.

MARTHA
Don't worry about a thing.

DENNIS
I brought my own pillow so I don't get my spit all over yours.

Alice bends down and hugs Dennis.

ALICE
You be a good boy.

DN9200103

Henry picks him up and gives him a kiss and hug.

HENRY
Listen to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson. And (X)
mind your manners. (X)

DENNIS
Yep.

He sets Dennis down. He takes Alice's hand. She's on the verge of tears.

HENRY
Thanks again.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED: (2) 176

They step down off the porch. Martha puts a gentle hand on Dennis' shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

176 CONTINUED: (3) 176

MARTHA
Bye, bye! (X)

DENNIS
Bring me something good!

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. ALICE AND HENRY

They head down the sidewalk. Alice brushes away a tear.

ALICE
I don't like this.

HENRY (X)
It's gonna be fine. Dennis'll have a (X)
great time. He loves the Wilson's. (X)

Alice looks back and waves. (X)

ALICE (X)
(to herself) (X)
Bye, sweetheart. (X)

DN9200103

EXT. PORCH

Martha and Dennis wave.

MARTHA
George, take Dennis' things up to the guest room, please.

GEORGE
He's got arms.

MARTHA (X)
Don't start, dear. (X)

She goes into the house. Wilson picks up the overnight bag. (X)

DENNIS
You know what, Mr. Wilson? You know why I'm not crying? Because if I'm not going to be around my mom and dad, the only other person that I want to be with is you.

GEORGE (X)
I can't tell you how deeply moved I am.

He holds the door open for Dennis. (X)

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED: (4) 176 (:

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. WIDE (X)

Dennis and Wilson go inside. On the door slam we HEAR A (X)
THUNDERCLAP. (X)

177 OMITTED 177 (X)

177A CU. RUFF'S WATER DISH. DAY 177A (:

On the ground. Raindrops splashing. (X)

EXT. MITCHELL BACKYARD. RUFF'S DOGHOUSE (X)

Ruff is in his doghouse watching the rain fall. (X)

177B CU. DENNIS' SANDBOX. DAY 177B (:

Puddles are forming in the sand. (X)

177C EXT. GARDEN. CU. WILSON'S PLANT. DAY 177C (:

An umbrella is strapped to a pitchfork stuck in the ground (X)
beside the plant protecting it from the rain. (X)

178 INT. WILSON HOUSE. LIBRARY. DAY 178 (:

Wilson is behind his desk. Spread out before him is a coin (X)
collection. Wilson's inspecting a gold coin with a magnifying (X)
glass. He refers to a pricing guide and makes a note in a (X)
binder. Dennis is on the sofa, unconsciously kicking his heels (X)
against it. Wilson looks up from his work. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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178 CONTINUED: 178

WILSON
Don't do that.

DENNIS
What?

WILSON
Kick my couch.

Dennis looks at his legs and realizes what he's doing. He stops.

DENNIS
(after a pause)
There sure isn't much to do here when it's raining outside.

Wilson doesn't respond.

DENNIS
Do you want to play cards?

WILSON
No.

DENNIS
Do you want to go put on your old Navy clothes and play war? (X) (X)

WILSON
No, I don't.

DENNIS
How about...

WILSON
I'm busy, Dennis.

DENNIS
Can I help?

WILSON
No.

DENNIS
Howcome?

WILSON
Because you can't.

DENNIS
That's not a very good answer.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

178 CONTINUED: (2) 178

CU. WILSON (X)

He hunches over the coins, trying to ignore Dennis. (X)

WILSON (X)
(preoccupied) (X)
It's the only one you're gonna get. (X)

A long beat and we HEAR HEAVY BREATHING. Wilson looks up slowly. He looks to the side. CAMERA PANS with Wilson's head movement revealing Dennis standing over his shoulder. (X) (X) (X)

DENNIS (X)
Is that pirate's gold? (X)

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

178 CONTINUED: (3) 178

INT. LIBRARY (X)

Wilson leans out of the way of Dennis. (X)

WILSON
No.

DENNIS
Is it real valuable?

WILSON
Yes.

DENNIS
How much money is that all worth?

WILSON
More than you'll ever have.

DENNIS
Is that why you keep it locked up in your safe?

WILSON
Uh-huh.

DENNIS
Howcome that safe looks like books?

Wilson sets down his magnifying glass. He's getting annoyed.

WILSON
Why do you ask so many questions?

DENNIS
I've only been around for five years. There's a lot of stuff I don't know.

WILSON
The safe looks like books so that if a thief comes in, he won't recognize it.

DENNIS
Is a thief a robber?

WILSON
Yes. (X)

DENNIS
You ever have a robber here?

WILSON
No.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

178 CONTINUED: (4) 178

DENNIS
Then howcome you got that safe?

WILSON
I have it in case a robber comes.

DENNIS
If your safe looks like books, why would a robber come?

WILSON
He wouldn't. That's the point.

DENNIS
(after a pause)
What if he was a book robber?

WILSON
If he was a book robber, he wouldn't be interested in my coins.

DENNIS (X)
What's the combination on your lock? (X)

WILSON (X)
You're the last person I'd tell. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Do you got it wrote down some place? (X)

WILSON (X)
It's in my head. (X)

DENNIS (X)
What do you mean? (X)

WILSON (X)
I know it. I remember it. (X)

DENNIS (X)
What if you forget it? (X)

WILSON (X)
It's a familiar number. I won't forget (X)
it. (X)

DENNIS (X)
What's that mean? (X)

WILSON (X)
It's a number I use all the time. (X)

DENNIS (X)
I bet I know what it is. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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178 CONTINUED: (5) 178 (:

WILSON (X)
I doubt it. (X)

DENNIS (X)
I bet it's your address. (X)

Wilson takes pause. It is his address. He's stunned that (X)
Dennis guessed. (X)

DENNIS (X)
You know how I know? My friend's got (X)
a lock on his bike and he uses his (X)
address for the combination so he don't (X)
forget. You're just as smart as him. (X)

Wilson stares at Dennis. (X)

DENNIS (X)
You got everything figured out, don't (X)
you, Mr. Wilson? (X)

WILSON
I haven't figured out how to get my
work done with you in the house.

DENNIS
That's a tough one.

DN9200103

179 ECU. RAINDROP. DUSK 179 (:

Hanging from the underside of the rail bridge. It falls. (X)

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

He's asleep under the bridge. His coat is bundled around his (X)
shoulders. The raindrop lands on his forehead. (X)

ECU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S EYES (X)

They open. He's been awakened by the droplet. (X)

EXT. RAIL BRIDGE. DUSK (X)

The rain has ended. The sun is setting. Switchblade Sam stands (X)
and stretches. (X)

180 INT. WILSON HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT 180 (:

Dennis is sitting in the tub. All we see is the top of his head. He's singing BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN. (X) (X)

INT. WILSON'S BEDROOM

Mrs. Wilson is sitting on the bed, pairing socks.

MARTHA
Are you wrinkled enough yet, Dennis?

CU. DENNIS

He looks at his hands.

DENNIS
Yep.

INT. BEDROOM

Martha crosses to the dresser.

MARTHA
Can I come in and help you get out of the tub?

CU. DENNIS (X)

He reaches out of the tub for a bath towel. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Not unless you want to see what the (X)
stork saw. (X)

DN9200103

181 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. GARDEN. NIGHT 181 (

Wilson heads for the house, admiring his garden as he goes. He stops to sniff a rose. Life is good. Ruff is BAYING.

182 INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT 182

Dennis brushing his teeth. He's making a horrible mess as tooth paste sprays every which way. His spits are not completely on the mark. As he brushes, he notices...

HIS POV

On a glass shelf above the sink, a nasal spray bottle.

INT. BATHROOM

Dennis puts his toothbrush down, wipes his mouth on his towel and picks up the spray bottle. He takes the top off and squeezes it. A geyser of fluid.

DENNIS
Cool. Old Faithful.

He turns it upside down. Squirts. Holds it like a gun. (X)
Squirts. Puts it between his palms and gives it a doubly (X)
powerful squeeze. Last squirt. He examines the bottle and (X)
unscrews the top. He sets it down. (X)

INSERT: LISTERINE BOTTLE

Dennis picks it up. Big, plastic, economy-size bottle. A small amount remains.

INT. BATHROOM

Dennis fills the squirt bottle with Listerine.

INSERT: SPRAY BOTTLE

The Listerine is splashing over Dennis' hands as he tries to fill it.

(CONTINUED)

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182 CONTINUED: 182

INT. BATHROOM

The Listerine bottle is empty. Dennis sets it aside. He puts the cap back on the nasal spray and returns it to the shelf. He opens the vanity cabinet and looks in.

HIS POV

Various cleansers. Dennis selects a bottle of Pinesol. It's about the same color as Listerine.

INT. BATHROOM

Dennis replaces the Listerine with Pinesol.

183 EXT. MITCHELL YARD. RUFF. NIGHT 183

His head is back, he's whining.

EXT. MITCHELL YARD. FENCE

Wilson separates the bushes. He looks in on Ruff angrily.

WILSON
Shut your yap!

CU. RUFF

He looks to Wilson. He lowers his head.

184 INT. GUEST BEDROOM. NIGHT 184

Martha tucks Dennis in. (X)

DENNIS
How old is this bed?

MARTHA
It belonged to my mother.

DENNIS
What's she sleeping on?

MARTHA
She's been gone for many years, Dennis.

DENNIS
On business?

MARTHA
No. She's in heaven.

(CONTINUED)

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184 CONTINUED: 184

DENNIS
Oh.
(pause)
There's an awful lot of people in heaven. Especially old people.

185 INT. WILSON HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 185

Wilson locks the front door and heads up the stairs.

186 INT. GUEST BEDROOM. NIGHT 186

The lights are down. Martha's sitting on the edge of the bed. (X)

MARTHA
How about if I recite my favorite poem when I was your age?

DENNIS
Is it about flowers and lambs?

MARTHA
No.

DENNIS
Okay.

DN9200103

Martha begins in a soft and musical voice.

MARTHA
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night, Sailed off in a wooden shoe -- Sailed on a river of crystal light, Into a sea of dew.

CU. DENNIS

He crosses his hands on his chest. MUSIC COMES UP. (X)

MARTHA (O.S.)
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?" the old moon asked the three.

CU. MARTHA

She recites as much to stir her memories as to entertain Dennis.

(CONTINUED)

186 CONTINUED: 186

MARTHA
"We have come to fish for the herring fish, that live in this beautiful sea; nets of silver and gold have we!" said Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

CU. DENNIS

He looks to the window. (X)

MARTHA (O.S.)
The old moon laughed and sang a song, (X)
as they rocked in the wooden shoe. And (X)
the wind that sped them all night long, (X)
ruffled the waves of dew. (X)

HIS POV

Out the window, beyond the treetops, a big, blue moon. CAMERA (X)
MOVES IN on the moon until it FILLS FRAME. (X)

MARTHA (V.O.)
The little stars were the herring fish, that lived in that beautiful sea -- "Now cast your nets wherever you wish -- never afeard are we!"

187 EXT. MITCHELL YARD. DOGHOUSE. NIGHT 187

The big moon lights the yard.

MARTHA (V.O.)
So cried the stars to the fishermen three: Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

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CU. RUFF

Head down on his paws, eyes up, looking at the Wilson house. (X)

MARTHA (V.O.)
All night long their nets they threw, to the stars in the twinkling foam --

HIS POV (X)

The Wilson house. It's washed in soft moonlight. Golden light (X)
spills out the guest room window. (X)

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED: 187

MARTHA (V.O.)
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe, bringing the fishermen home; 'Twas all so pretty a sail it seemed, as if it could not be...

187A INT. HOTEL ROOM. HENRY. NIGHT 187A (X)

He's sitting by the window, in his suit pants and open shirt. (X)
He's looking through his wallet. (X)

MARTHA (V.O.) (X)
And some folks thought 'twas a dream (X)
they'd dreamed, of sailing that (X)
beautiful sea- (X)

CU. HENRY (X)

A sad smile as he looks at a photo of the family. (X)

MARTHA (V.O.)
But I shall name you the fishermen three: Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

188 thru 189 OMITTED 188 thru 189 (X)

190 EXT. OKLAHOMA CITY. MOTEL. NIGHT 190

The big moon hangs over the motel.

MARTHA (V.O.)
Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes...

191 INT. MOTEL ROOM. NIGHT 191

Alice is in bed. Moonlight floods the dreary room.

MARTHA (V.O.)
And Nod is a little head...

CU. ALICE'S ENGAGEMENT RING

The single-carat stone catches the moonlight and twinkles.

MARTHA (V.O.)
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies...

(CONTINUED)

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191 CONTINUED: 191

CU. ALICE

She's looking at the ring. Her eye is drawn to the source of the light...

(CONTINUED)

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191 CONTINUED: (2) 191

MARTHA (V.O.)
Is a wee one's trundle-bed.
So shut your eyes while mother sings...

HER POV

A small window in the bathroom. The shade is up. The moon is in the window.

MARTHA (V.O.)
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things...

CU. ALICE

She's as lonely as she'll ever be.

MARTHA (V.O.)
As you rock in the misty sea,
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three: Wynken...

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192 CU. MARTHA. NIGHT 192

Smiling warmly.

MARTHA
Blynken...

CU. DENNIS

He's asleep.

MARTHA (O.S.)
And Nod.

The light goes out.

192A EXT. NIGHT SKY 192A (:

The moon FILLS FRAME. CAMERA BOOMS DOWN to the rooftops of the (X) buildings in town to an alley to Switchblade Sam, sitting on a (X) trash can. He takes a drag from his cigarette, rolls his head (X) back and exhales the smoke into the night air. MUSIC ENDS. (X)

193 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 193

Wilson is in his pajamas. He walks into the bathroom.

194 INT. BATHROOM. CU. FLOOR. NIGHT 194

A substantial puddle of bathwater on the tile floor. Wilson's foot steps down in it.

INT. BATHROOM

Wilson slips on the water and does the splits.

195 INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT 195

Martha stands at the guest room door. She's wistful and sad.

196 INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT 196

Wilson picks himself up off the floor. He looks down at the torn crotch of his pajamas.

WILSON (X)
God bless it! My good pajamas. (X)

197 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 197

Mrs. Wilson enters. She deposits Dennis' dirty clothes in her empty laundry basket. She lovingly looks at the dirty overalls, the tiny socks...

198 INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT 198

Wilson pours Listerine in the drinking glass and fills his mouth. He swishes it around vigorously. He suddenly freezes.

CU. WILSON

His eyes open wide in horror.

INT. BATHROOM

Wilson spits violently into the sink.

WILSON
AHHH! GAAA! URRRRK!

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199 INT. BEDROOM. MARTHA. NIGHT 199

She's putting George's clothes in the laundry basket. She HEARS HIS CRIES.

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED: 199

MARTHA
Poor thing. I wish he'd get that hernia fixed.

200 INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT 200

Wilson is bent over the sink flushing his mouth directly from the faucet.

201 INT. WILSON HOUSE. STAIRS. NIGHT 201

Martha heads down the stairs with the laundry.

202 INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT 202

Wilson pops his pills and washes them down with water. He sniffs a few times. He feels congested. He reaches for...

INSERT: NASAL SPRAY

George takes it off the shelf.

INT. BATHROOM. WILSON

He blocks one nostril, puts the sprayer in the other and squeezing the bottle, inhales deeply. He freezes again. He pulls the bottle out of his nose. He looks into the mirror.

203 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 203

O.S. WILSON SCREAMS.

204 thru 205 OMITTED 204 thru (X) 205

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206 INT. BATHROOM. SINK. UNDERWATER. NIGHT 206

From the bottom of the sink, UP through the water. Wilson plunges his face into the water. He fires a stream of air bubbles out his nostrils.

206A EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. BACKYARD. NIGHT. LATER 206A (:

Ruff is sitting in front of the doghouse, head back, HOWLING. (X)
Lonesome, soulful CRIES. (X)

207 INT. GUEST ROOM. CU. DENNIS. NIGHT 207 (:

Dennis is sleeping. He opens his eyes as he HEARS RUFF BAYING. (X)

208 CU. RUFF. NIGHT 208

Head back, howling.

209 EXT. GUEST ROOM. WINDOW. NIGHT 209

Dennis pulls the curtain up from the bottom and peeks under.

HIS POV

Ruff is in the backyard.

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210 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 210

The lights are out. George is in bed. On his side. Martha comes out of the bathroom. She takes off her robe and climbs into bed. She lies back.

MARTHA
(after a pause)
George? Are you sleeping?

GEORGE
I was until you started yacking.

MARTHA
I'm sorry.

GEORGE
Was Dennis in our bathroom?

MARTHA
Yes.

GEORGE
I thought so.

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED: 210

MARTHA
I straightened it up.

(CONTINUED)

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210 CONTINUED: (2) 210

GEORGE
I think the little rat put mouthwash in my nasal spray and toilet cleanser in my mouthwash. (X) (X)

MARTHA
Why would he do something like that?

GEORGE
Must you ask?

211 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. BACK PORCH. NIGHT 211

Dennis sneaks out the door.

212 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 212

Dennis hurries down the driveway.

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213 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 213

George fluffs his pillow, clears his throat, and adjusts his position in the bed as Martha rhapsodizes.

MARTHA
I've never loved this house as much as I did today and tonight.

GEORGE
Don't go gooey on me, Martha. It's the same damn house we've had for forty-one years. The only thing that's changed is the water heater and the toilet seat.

MARTHA
The house is different with a child in it.

GEORGE
Yeah. It's noisy and dangerous.

214 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. DRIVEWAY. NIGHT 214

Dennis runs Ruff down the driveway.

215 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 215

The conversation continues.

215 CONTINUED: 215

MARTHA
I recited a poem for Dennis tonight that my mother used to recite to me. I remembered every word. In some tiny measure, my mother would be proud. I passed something on.

GEORGE
It's ten o'clock, Martha. Don't start the regrets.

MARTHA
I can't help it, George.

GEORGE
Jeez, this is the sort of thing a gal moans about in her thirties.

MARTHA
I did. And in my forties. In my fifties...

GEORGE
You're saying that for the forty-six years we've been married you've felt you're missing something?

MARTHA
I'm not complaining, George. I'm only saying that I'm enjoying taking care of a child.

GEORGE
You're going deeper than <u>that</u>.

MARTHA
Maybe I am.

GEORGE
You can't cry over milk that's spilled, dried-up, turned to dust, and blown around the globe six times.

MARTHA
(after a long pause)
I would have been a good mother.

GEORGE
And I would have been a swell fireman.

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216 INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT 216

Dennis lets Ruff in.

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED: 216

DENNIS (X)
Shh! You have to be very, very, very, (X)
very quiet. (X)

217 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 217

Martha gets out of bed.

GEORGE
Where're you going?

MARTHA
To make myself a cup of tea.

GEORGE
I didn't decree that we wouldn't have children, Martha. That was out of both of our hands. Okay? I'm not the villain.

MARTHA
This isn't about having children or not having children, George. You miss the point. It's about my feeling something very good and not being able to tell you about it.

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She puts on her robe.

218 INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT 218

Dennis slips into the guest room a moment before Martha exits the bedroom.

219 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 219

George rolls over and settles in.

220 INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT 220

Martha sits at the table as the kettle boils.

221 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 221

George lies still for a moment. He grumbles and sits up. He sighs.

222 INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT 222

Martha pours her tea.

223 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT 223

Wilson ties his robe and exits.

224 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 224

George comes down the stairs. He turns toward the dining room. Something catches his eyes in the living room.

HIS POV

His easy chair. Back to the foyer. Above the chair, a fringe of gray hair.

CU. WILSON

He's struck by seeing Martha in the dark room. He feels suddenly very sad.

WILSON
(gently)
Martha?

INT. LIVING ROOM. WILSON

He steps into the room.

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GEORGE
I didn't mean to hurt you.
(clears his throat)
I'm not terribly good with feelings and emotions.

He steps to the chair. He puts his hands on the back.

GEORGE
There are a lot of subjects I'd just as soon not bring up, let alone discuss.
(takes a deep breath)
I would have liked a son. Or a daughter.

He gently strokes Martha's head.

(CONTINUED)

224 CONTINUED: 224

GEORGE
But I'm an old horse and there's no getting me to gallop. You couldn't fire the fatherly feelings in me because they're not there.

INT. FOYER

Martha's standing in the foyer, looking into the living room.

GEORGE (O.S.)
But that doesn't mean my feelings for you have gone cold. That'll never happen.

CU. MARTHA

She's puzzled. What's he doing, who's he talking to?

CU. RUFF

His eyes are rolled back as Wilson massages his head.

GEORGE (O.S.)
You got all the love I have. I didn't share it with anybody but you.

Ruff opens his mouth and begins to pant.

CU. GEORGE

He grins.

GEORGE
Remember this? Je t'aime.

CU. MARTHA

She's a little embarrassed.

CU. RUFF

Enjoying the massage. Panting heavily.

CU. GEORGE

He's enjoying the reaction.

GEORGE
I will tease you no more.

(CONTINUED)

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224 CONTINUED: (2) 224

CU. RUFF

He lets out a little whine. George leans around the chair. He closes his eyes and puckers.

RUFF'S POV. CU. WILSON

Coming in for a kiss.

CU. MARTHA

She's baffled.

MARTHA
George?

ECU. WILSON

His eyes pop open.

HIS POV

Ruff's big, black nose. His droopy eyes. HORROR STING!

RUFF'S POV. CU. WILSON

Down Ruff's hairy snoot to Wilson, nose-to-nose, lip-to-lip, eyes open wide. BIGGER HORROR STING! (X)

225 EXT. BACK DOOR. NIGHT 225

It bursts open and Ruff charges out. The door slams.

226 EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT 226 (X

Gunther's house. From the back. CAMERA MOVES IN and BOOMS UP (X)
to a second floor window. Switchblade Sam is in the window (X)
emptying a wallet in a dark room. He stuffs the money into his (X)
coat pocket and exits FRAME. (X)

226A INT. HOUSE. HALLWAY. BEDROOM DOOR. NIGHT 226A (X

Gunther opens the door and looks out. He's groggy. (X)

GUNTHER (X)
Daddy? (X)

HIS POV (X)

Switchblade Sam is frozen on the stairs, his back to CAMERA. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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226A CONTINUED: 226A (:

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

He turns to CAMERA, a cold, threatening look on his face. (X)

CU. GUNTHER (X)

His eyes open wide in surprise. (X)

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

He puts his finger to his lips and hisses... (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)

Shhh... (X)

CU. GUNTHER (X)

He jumps back in his room and slams the door. (X)

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227 INT. WILSON HOUSE. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY. - DAY 227

The attic stairs are down. "WHATCHA KNOW JOE" IS PLAYING.

CU. RECORD PLAYER

A 78 spins.

228 INT. ATTIC. DAY 228

Wilson is rummaging through boxes. Dennis is sitting on a trunk by the attic stairs.

DENNIS
What're you looking for?

WILSON
Garden lanterns.

DENNIS
What's that? (X) (X)

WILSON
They're lights. (X) (X)

DENNIS
What kind of lights? (X) (X)

WILSON
Garden lights. (X) (X)

DENNIS
What's that? (X) (X)

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Wilson looks around at Dennis.

WILSON
Why don't you just be quiet and enjoy the music?

DENNIS
I can't. It's too old.

WILSON
You know what you don't like about it? You can understand the words.

DENNIS
You only like music that you already heard, right? (X) (X)

WILSON
I only like good music, and unfortunately they stopped making it in 1945. (X) (X) (X) (X)

(CONTINUED)

228 CONTINUED: 228 (:

DENNIS (X)
Is that true? (X)

WILSON (X)
Can I get my work done, please? (X)

He returns to his search. Dennis looks around. He sees...

HIS POV

Electrical switch.

INT. ATTIC. WILSON

He blows a huge plume of dust off a trunk.

INSERT: SWITCH

Dennis turns it on.

(CONTINUED)

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228 CONTINUED: (2) 228

EXT. HOUSE

An attic fan goes on.

INT. ATTIC. WILSON

The plume of dust blows back in Wilson's face.

INT. ATTIC

Wilson turns back to Dennis.

WILSON
Turn that off!

INSERT: SWITCH

Dennis quickly shuts it off.

INT. ATTIC. WILSON

He rifles through a box.

CU. DENNIS

He's behind an old magazine -- VA VOOM! A bathing beauty on the cover hiding behind a big beach ball.

DENNIS
Holy smokes! You gotta be pretty brave to ride on a tiger in your underpants!

CU. WILSON

He looks up in alarm, then over his shoulder.

HIS POV

Dennis is sitting on the trunk, legs crossed, perusing the magazine.

CU. WILSON

He yells...

WILSON
Put that away! That's not for kids!

INT. ATTIC (X)

Dennis lowers the magazine. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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228 CONTINUED: (3) 228

DENNIS
Howcome? It's fulla wild animals and cowboys.

WILSON (X)
PUT IT AWAY! (X)

Dennis drops the magazine and crosses his hands in his lap. (X)

INT. ATTIC. WILSON

Wilson turns back to his search.

INT. ATTIC. DENNIS

He sits passively for a brief moment. Something quickly catches his eye.

HIS POV

A box of mothballs.

CU. DENNIS

He reaches for the box. He opens it and looks inside. The smell turns his head. He tries to close the lid.

CU. BOX

Dennis pushes down on the lid, the box bursts.

CU. FLOOR

The mothballs spill onto the floor.

CU. DENNIS

Surprised. He quickly sets the box aside.

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INT. ATTIC. WILSON

He shifts his search to the garment bags. He sneaks a look back at Dennis.

HIS POV

Dennis sitting on the trunk, hands in his lap, whistling, looking up. (X)

(CONTINUED)

228 CONTINUED: (4) 228

CU. DENNIS (X)

Stops whistling. (X)

HIS POV (X)

A canoe is hung in the rafters over the attic stairs. CAMERA (X)
FOLLOWS a rope across the ceiling to a small pulley. (X)

CU. DENNIS (X)

He follows the rope down around behind him. He looks between (X)
the trunk and the wall. (X)

HIS POV (X)

The rope is fixed to an anchor in the wall. Dennis begins (X)
unwinding the rope. (X)

CU. DENNIS (X)

He's looking up at the canoe. (X)

INT. ATTIC

Wilson throws down a garment bag in frustration.

WILSON
Martha! Where're the GD garden lanterns!?

Wilson marches angrily toward the attic stairs.

CU. FLOOR

Mothballs scattered on the floor. Wilson's shoe comes down...

INT. ATTIC

Wilson's feet fly out from under him. He SHRIEKS and lands flat on his back.

CU. ROPE ANCHOR (X)

The rope suddenly unwinds. (X)

INT. ATTIC. CANOE (X)

It falls from the rafters. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

Wincing in pain, he notices something in the rafters. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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228 CONTINUED: (5) 228 (:

HIS POV (X)

The front of the canoe is swinging down on him. (X)

INT. ATTIC. WILSON (X)

FROM HIS FEET. The canoe bow crashes to the floor. The nose is (X)
buried between his legs. (X)

INT. ATTIC. OVERHEAD (X)

Wilson's eyes are open wide in shock. The canoe bow is between (X)
his legs, a millimeter from his crotch. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He lifts his head off the floor. He freezes. (X)

HIS POV (X)

The canoe is filled with garden lanterns. They cascade down (X)
over him. (X)

228A INT. WILSON HOUSE. SECOND FLOOR LANDING. DAY 228A (:

Martha calls up the attic steps. (X)

MARTHA (X)
George? You put the garden lanterns in (X)
the old canoe! (X)

228B CU. GARDEN LANTERN. DAY 228B (:

Dennis lifts it away revealing Wilson's deadpan face. (X)

CU. DENNIS (X)

Looking down at Wilson. (X)

DENNIS (X)
I think I better go outside and play. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

Dennis puts the lantern back on Wilson's face. (X)

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229 thru 232 OMITTED 229 thru (X) 232

232A EXT. OKLAHOMA CITY. AIRPORT. DAY 232A (:

It's raining to beat hell. (X)

232B INT. AIRPORT. PAY PHONES. ALICE. DAY 232B (:

She's dialing a number. She's nervous. (X)

232C INT. HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM. DAY 232C (:

Martha's making the bed. The PHONE RINGS. Martha answers it. (X)

MARTHA (X)
Hello? (X)

232D INT. AIRPORT. ALICE. DAY 232D (:

Alice is on a pay phone in a departure lounge. Rain runs down the windows in sheets. (X) (X)

ALICE (X)
Martha? This is Alice. I'm still in Oklahoma. (X) (X) (X)

232E CU. MARTHA. DAY 232E (:

A troubled look. (X)

MARTHA (X)
Oh, dear. (X)

232F CU. ALICE. DAY 232F (:

She covers her ear to block the CRASHING THUNDER. (X)

ALICE (X)
There's a terrible storm. My flight's been canceled. Until the weather clears, I don't know what's going to happen. (X) (X) (X) (X) (X)

232G INT. BEDROOM. DAY 232G (:

Martha looks out the window. (X)

(CONTINUED)

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232G CONTINUED: 232G (:

HER POV (X)

Below to the garden. George is angrily shaking a tangle of garden lanterns. We can barely HEAR HIS MUTED CURSING. (X) (X)

232H CU. ALICE. DAY 232H (:

She's embarrassed. (X)

ALICE (X)
I know you have your garden party (X)
tonight. I feel terrible. I don't (X)
know what to do. (X)

232I CU. MARTHA. DAY 232I (:

She steels herself and says the only thing she can. (X)

MARTHA (X)
Don't worry about it. You get home (X)
when you can. We'll be just fine here. (X)

232J CU. ALICE. DAY 232J (:

She winces. (X)

ALICE (X)
What's George going to say? (X)

232K EXT. WILSON'S HOUSE. GARDEN. WILSON. DAY 232K (:

Staring in disbelief. (X)

WILSON (X)
Over my dead body! (X)

EXT. GARDEN (X)

Martha lets him blow. (X)

WILSON (X)
This is the crowning moment of my (X)
retired life! I'm not throwing it away (X)
like the evening trash for some ninny (X)
who can't get her keister to the (X)
airport on time! (X)

(CONTINUED)

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232K CONTINUED: 232K (:

MARTHA (X)
George Wilson, you have no right to (X)
insult Alice. She can't help the (X)
weather any more than you or I. It's (X)
just plain bad luck. It's no one's (X)
fault. (X)

WILSON (X)
A tragedy of this magnitude has to be (X)
somebody's fault, Martha. (X)

MARTHA (X)
It isn't a tragedy. A little boy's (X)
going to join us for a party. If you (X)
want to forsake your neighbors when (X)
they need help, do it alone! (X)

She turns and marches back to the house. (X)

WILSON (X)
Why is it when everyone else feasts on (X)
the pleasures of life, I get the (X)
indigestion? (X)

Martha stops on the porch. She turns back to George. (X)

MARTHA (X)
Because you're an old grump. (X)

She goes inside. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

A slow burn... (X)

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233 EXT. WOODS. TREE HOUSE. DAY 233

Dennis, Joey, and Margaret are climbing up into the tree house. Ruff lies down in the grass beneath the tree.

INT. TREE HOUSE. DOWN ANGLE

The kids climbing up.

INT. TREE HOUSE. FLOOR

Dennis' head appears. A look of surprise.

HIS POV

Switchblade Sam sitting in the tree house. Waiting. Grinning.

(CONTINUED)

233 CONTINUED: 233

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Welcome.

CU. DENNIS

He's cautious. He doesn't move.

INT. TREE HOUSE

Switchblade Sam is warm and friendly.

(CONTINUED)

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233 CONTINUED: (2) 233

SWITCHBLADE SAM
There's nothing to be afraid of. Come on in. I have something for you.

He reaches around behind his back. He brings out Baby Louise.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

A calculating grin.

ECU. CANDY BAR WRAPPER. LATER

Aluminum foil wrapper. A few crumbs.

INT. TREE HOUSE. KIDS

Mouths full of chocolate. Margaret's holding Baby Louise.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He watches the kids carefully.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
I guess we can be friends, huh?

INT. TREE HOUSE. KIDS

They look at each other, mouths still too full to speak. They look to Switchblade Sam and nod.

INT. TREE HOUSE

Switchblade Sam lights a cigarette butt.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You all live in nice homes, huh?

The kids nod.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Lots of very nice things in them?

The kids nod.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
I don't have much. Everything I own is in my pockets. But what I do have, I'll share with you. Like how I found the baby doll, and gave it back to you. And how I give you my candy. If say, I had a nice television set. You could have it.

(CONTINUED)

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233 CONTINUED: (3) 233

JOEY
Really?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
If I had...help me out. What are some of the things you kiddies got in your houses?

MARGARET
Dining room set.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Those are nice but I'm thinking of something you can put in your pocket or in a bag. Something valuable. Worth a lot of money. Like jewelry.

MARGARET
My mom's got lots of jewelry. My Grandma has even more. Grandmas wear lots of jewelry to cover up the spots on their skin.

DENNIS
How about gold coins?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Oh, that's nice.

DENNIS
Yep. They're real valuable.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Are these coins in a safe?

DENNIS
Yep. But it doesn't look like a safe. It looks like books. If you go in the room downstairs where all the books are, you don't know there's gold there.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Ain't that smart.

DENNIS (X)
Yep and also, you know what? If you (X)
forget the combination to the lock? (X)
All you gotta to do is look at the (X)
address on the house. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
That's the combination, huh? The (X)
address? (X)

(CONTINUED)

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233 CONTINUED: (4) 233 (:

DENNIS (X)
Yep. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
That makes it real easy, don't it? (X)
(changes the subject) (X)
Let me ask you something, your folks (X)
ever tell you that if you talk with a (X)
stranger you're supposed to tell 'em (X)
about it? (X)

MARGARET
Yep.

Dennis and Joey nod.

(CONTINUED)

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233 CONTINUED: (5) 233

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You don't gotta tell 'em about me.

DENNIS
Howcome?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
'Cause I ain't a stranger. I'm a friend.

MARGARET
Good point.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
If you was to tell them about me they might not understand that we're friends and they wouldn't let you come back here no more.

MARGARET
(corrects him)
Anymore.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
That's right. So it's best you keep quiet about me.

DENNIS
Okay.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You better get going now. It's getting late.

DN9200103

234 EXT. TOWN. DAY 234

Dennis, Joey, and Margaret walk through town. Ruff trots along after them. (X) (X)

EXT. TOWN. A BLOCK BACK

Switchblade Sam peeks out of the alley.

HIS POV

The kids cross the street at the corner, turning left. (X)

235 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. DAY 235

Dennis walks up Wilson's driveway. Ruff follows. (X)

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. TREE

Switchblade Sam peeks out from behind a tree. He grins. (X)

236 thru 240 OMITTED 236 thru 240 (X)

DN92001

241 EXT. WILSON PATIO. DAY 241 (

Tables are set and beautifully decorated. A uniformed MAN is putting the finishing touches on the floral arrangements. (X) (X)

EXT. GARDEN (X)

Chairs ring the pavilion. Wilson steps back from his plant. He looks up. (X) (X)

HIS POV (X)

Heavy cloud cover. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He's worried. (X)

DN9200103

242 OMITTED 242 (X)

243 INT. GUEST ROOM. DAY 243

Mrs. Wilson is dressing Dennis in his Sunday suit -- jacket and short pants, white shirt, bow tie.

DENNIS
Howcome you got church clothes here in my size?

MRS. WILSON
These are yours. I went to your house and got them.

DENNIS
Oh.
(after-thought)
I wish you hadn't.

244 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. DAY 244

Ruff is chained to his doghouse.

245 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. STREET. DAY 245

OLDSTERS are arriving in their big American sedans.

246 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PORCH. DAY. LATER 246

Wilson's in a new, summer-weight suit and tie. Martha's in a cheery floral print dress. Dennis is in his suit.

WILSON
Well, Dennis, your mother didn't arrive.

DENNIS (X)
Nope. (X)

WILSON (X)
This is a very important event for me. (X)

DENNIS
I know.

WILSON
I don't want any nonsense. You mind whatever manners you have and don't make a pest of yourself.

DENNIS
Okay.

WILSON
Don't embarrass me.

DENNIS (X)
Okay. (X)

Martha waves. George puts on a proud smile. Dennis watches.

DENNIS
(to himself)
Cheek pinchers.

HIS POV

A gaggle of OLD LADIES shuffling up the walk.

CU. DENNIS (X)

He's wincing as a procession of aged fingers pinch his cheeks. (X)

DN9200103

247 EXT. BACKYARD. NIGHT 247

The garden lights are on. A buffet table is set up on the driveway in front of the garage door. In the center of the table is a watermelon filled with fruit salad. There's a cake, cookies, a coffee urn, plates, and flatware. The pavilion lights are on the Mock Orchid. Mrs. Butterwell and Mr. Little (X) are presenting Wilson with his award.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

247 CONTINUED: 247

Dennis is sitting alone, on a chair by the side garage door. Mr. Little and Mrs. Butterwell are having trouble reading their speech in the low light. Mrs. Butterwell is holding the plaque.

MRS. BUTTERWELL
On behalf of the Garden Club...

MR. LITTLE
Selection Committee and...

EXT. GARAGE. DENNIS

He leans back on his chair, holding the garage door knob. He swings forward and back a couple of times. Something inside the garage catches his attention. He leans back slowly.

HIS POV

The garage door button.

CU. DENNIS

He's wondering about the button. Curious what it does.

EXT. GARDEN

Mrs. Butterwell and Mr. Little fumble through their notes.

MRS. BUTTERWELL
The Events Chairperson...

MR. LITTLE
Howard Burnside.

MRS. BUTTERWELL
We'd like to present...

MR. LITTLE
George Wilson.

MRS. BUTTERWELL
With this...what's that say?

She hands her glasses to Mr. Little. He gives her his.

CU. WILSON (X)

Annoyed with the old folks. He glances up at the sky. (X)

HIS POV (X)

The moon is hidden behind heavy cloud cover. (X)

(CONTINUED)

DN920103

247 CONTINUED: (2) 247

CU. DENNIS

Staring at the button.

CU. DENNIS' HAND

It starts to move out of his lap. He grabs it with his other hand and holds it in place.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

247 CONTINUED: (3) 247

EXT. GARDEN

Mr. Little holds the paper up to the pavilion lights.

MR. LITTLE
Plague?

WILSON
(under his breath)
Plaque.

MR. LITTLE
Say what?

WILSON
The plaque. Present me with the plaque.

MRS. BUTTERWELL
We present the plaque, George. That's the rules.

WILSON
Never mind.

MR. LITTLE
Plaque. That's what it says.

MRS. BUTTERWELL
Plaque.

DN9200103

She hands it to George. The NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHER snaps a photo.

CU. DENNIS

He's in a sweat. Still looking at the button. He's breathing a little heavier. (X)

CU. DENNIS' HAND

His fingers are twitching.

CU. DENNIS

He can't take it anymore.

CU. DENNIS' HAND

It breaks free from the other and lunges out.

(CONTINUED)

247 CONTINUED: (4) 247

CU. BUTTON

Dennis' finger slams into the button.

INT. GARAGE

An electric garage door opener light goes on. The wheels begin to turn.

INT. GARAGE. FLOOR

The door begins to open.

CU. DENNIS

He listens carefully. He HEARS THE OPENER.

INT. GARAGE. DOOR

Dennis peeks in through the doorway.

HIS POV

The door continues to open.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

The door is opening into the buffet table.

CU. TABLE

The back legs lift off the driveway. (X)

CU. WATERMELON

Starts to roll...

EXT. GARAGE. DENNIS

Standing on his seat, he jumps down and joins the others in applauding Wilson.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

The table topples. The cake, the plates, coffee, the silver.

EXT. GARDEN

The APPLAUSE covers the SOUND OF THE TABLE COLLAPSING.

(CONTINUED)

DN920103

247 CONTINUED: (5) 247

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. FRONT YARD

The watermelon rolls down the driveway.

EXT. STREET

A car approaches.

EXT. STREET. DRIVEWAY

The watermelon rolls into the street. The passing car flattens it.

EXT. GARDEN

The applause dies down. George speaks, clutching the plaque. (X)

WILSON
Thank you, everyone. I'm honored. I (X)
will cherish this forever. (X)

More APPLAUSE. He looks at his watch.

WILSON
In fifteen minutes, I will share with (X)
you the blossom of my life and the (X)
jewel of the garden you're honoring (X)
this evening. Forty years ago when I (X)
started this garden, I planted a seed. (X)
From that seed grew this grand plant. (X)
Tonight it blossoms for the first and (X)
only time in its long life. A few (X)
moments in the moonlight and it's gone. (X)

The GUESTS are thoroughly impressed.

WILSON
As we await this glorious moment, (X)
Martha and I invite you to enjoy (X)
dessert and coffee. (X)

CU. DENNIS

He winces.

EXT. GARDEN

The Guests cross the patio, slowing as they see...

THEIR POV

Dessert is on the concrete, coffee is running down the drive.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

247 CONTINUED: (6) 247

CU. WILSON

He walks toward the patio, he glances at...

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

247 CONTINUED: (7) 247

HIS POV. MOVING

Dennis smiling nervously at him.

CU. WILSON

Puzzled. Concerned. Suspicious.

EXT. PATIO. CU. MARTHA

Biting her nails as she surveys the mess. Wilson steps up behind her. His jaw drops.

EXT. GARDEN. DENNIS

He's standing in the garden path, his hands in his pockets.

DENNIS
I made a mistake.

CU. WILSON

Glaring angrily.

248 INT. WILSON'S BEDROOM. NIGHT. LATER 248

Dennis is sitting in the window.

HIS POV

The Guests are seated at the pavilion.

DN9200103

248A CU. WILSON. NIGHT 248A (:

He's looking at the sky expectantly. (X)

HIS POV (X)

The clouds have thinned. They're moving. The moon goes in and out of cover. (X) (X)

248B EXT. HOUSE. WINDOW. NIGHT 248B

Dennis feels lonely and left out.

248C EXT. WILSON'S HOUSE. FRONT PORCH. NIGHT 248C (:

CAMERA MOVES IN on the porch, bringing the house numbers into CLOSE-UP. O.S. a SWITCHBLADE SNAPS OPEN. The blade ENTERS FRAME and taps each of the four numerals. (X) (X) (X)

249 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. SCREEN DOOR. NIGHT 249

The door opens and Switchblade Sam peeks in. (X)

250 INT. HOUSE. LIBRARY. NIGHT 250

The boots sneak into the room.

INT. LIBRARY. BOOKSHELF

A dirty hand tests the books on the shelf. (X)

DN92001063

251 OMITTED 251 (X)

252 CU. MOCK ORCHID. NIGHT 252 (:

From below. The plant is in the FOREGROUND. The clouds clear (X)
the moon bathing the plant in silver light. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He leans forward in anticipation. (X)

CU. MOCK ORCHID (X)

The bud is beginning to unfold. (X)

DN9200103

253 INT. LIBRARY. NIGHT 253

Switchblade Sam has discovered the wall safe. He's working the (X)
combination. (X)

254 CU. PLANT. NIGHT 254

The fleshy outer leaves fold back. (X)

EXT. GARDEN. GUESTS

They lean forward in their seats for a better look. (X)

CU. WILSON

Eyes wide with amazement.

255 INT. FOYER. NIGHT 255

Switchblade Sam runs for the front screen door. He charges out.
The screen door slams shut.

256 INT. WILSON'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 256

Dennis HEARS THE DOOR SLAM. He turns from the window.

257 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 257

Dennis sneaks down the stairs.

258 INT. LIBRARY. NIGHT 258

Books are strewn about. The safe is open.

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED: 258

INT. LIBRARY. DOOR

Dennis stands in the doorway, eyes wide, mouth open in alarm.

259 CU. MOCK ORCHID. NIGHT 259 (:

The outer leaves are pulled back revealing diaphanous inner (X)
leaves covering a thick core. (X)

CU. WILSON

He begins to smile.

260 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 260

Dennis races through the kitchen.

261 CU. MOCK ORCHID. NIGHT 261 (:

The inner leaves peel back revealing the blossom studded core. (X)

EXT. HOUSE. PATIO

Dennis bursts out of the house.

DENNIS
MR. WILSON!

EXT. GARDEN

All heads turn to Dennis.

CU. WILSON

He looks back to Dennis.

CU. MOCK ORCHID (X)

The core expels its hundreds of tiny white flowers in a glorious (X)
explosion. (X)

CU. DENNIS

He SCREAMS.

DENNIS
SOMEBODY ROBBED YOUR HOUSE!

EXT. GARDEN

The Guests jump to their feet.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

261 CONTINUED: 261

CU. WILSON

He yells to the Guests.

WILSON
MY PLANT! LOOK! (X)

EXT. MOON

The clouds pass over the moon.

CU. WILSON

He turns back to the plant.

HIS POV

The blossoms are gone from the plant leaving an ugly, dry, hard, (X)
pitted core. A moon shadow falls over it. (X)

CU. WILSON (X)

He SCREAMS! (X)

WILSON (X)
AHHHHHH! (X)

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PATIO (X)

Dennis steps aside as Martha hurries into the house. Guests (X)
follow. Dennis is watching Wilson. (X)

HIS POV (X)

Through the crowd. Wilson shaking his fist at the moon. (X)

DN9200103

262 INT. HOUSE. LIBRARY. NIGHT 262

Martha stands in the doorway with several of her Guests.
They're shocked. Martha gasps. (X)

MARTHA (X)
The coins! (X)

262A EXT. ALLEY. NIGHT 262A (

Switchblade Sam flees down an alley. (X)

263 EXT. GARDEN. NIGHT 263

Wilson stands alone before his plant. (X)

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: 263 (:

WILSON (X)
Forty years. Down the drain. (X)

He kicks the plant out of the ground. He turns and marches (X)
toward the house. He's rigid with anger. (X)

HIS POV. MOVING

Dennis is on the patio. He's sad and scared. He knows he's (X)
done wrong. (X)

EXT. PATIO

Wilson steps up to Dennis. Dennis bows his head. (X)

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

263 CONTINUED: (2) 263

CU. WILSON (X)

He glares down at Dennis. (X)

WILSON
You're a pest, a menace, a selfish, spoiled, little boy and I have no use for you. You took something from me that I can't get back. Something that means more to me than you ever will. Do you understand?

CU. DENNIS

He looks up. He's on the verge of tears. He nods. (X)

CU. WILSON

Cold as a polar bear's ass.

WILSON
I don't want to see you, I don't want (X)
to know you. Get outta my way. (X)

CU. DENNIS

He steps aside as Wilson enters the house.

DN9200103

264 INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT 264

Dennis stands at the screen door.

DENNIS
Mr. Wilson?

INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN

Wilson doesn't turn back.

CU. DENNIS

He calls to Wilson.

DENNIS
I'm sorry!

264A INT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 264A (:

Elderly folks are milling about the foyer, library and living (X)
room. Wilson marches in. His anger stifles any conversation. (X)

(CONTINUED)

264A CONTINUED: 264A (X)

WILSON (X)
Go on home, the party's over. Adios, (X)
take a hike, get lost. (X)

INT. HOUSE. STAIRWAY (X)

Martha comes down the stairs as George heads up. (X)

MARTHA (X)
George? (X)

Wilson stops on the stairs. (X)

MARTHA (X)
Dennis was telling the truth. There (X)
was someone in the house. Your coins (X)
were stolen. Nothing's missing (X)
upstairs. (X)

WILSON (X)
If he hadn't come here in the first (X)
place, if he didn't live next door, if (X)
I'd never seen the brat, none of this (X)
would have happened. (X)

MARTHA (X)
George! (X)

WILSON (X)
I'm going to bed. There isn't much (X)
else the little rat can ruin. Wake me (X)
up if he sets my car on fire. (X)

He passes Martha and continues up the stairs. (X)

MARTHA (X)
Is Dennis outside? (X)

WILSON (X)
I don't know and I don't care. (X)

DN9200103

265 EXT. TOWN. NIGHT 265

Dennis rides his bike through town. He's pulling his wagon. He (X)
turns a corner, CLEARING FRAME. A beat later a police car races
through town, lights flashing, siren SCREAMING.

CU. DENNIS (X)

His cheeks are still damp from tears. He's sorrowful. (X)

266 OMITTED 266 (X)

267 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 267

Two squad cars are parked in front. The few remaining Guests are leaving. A taxi pulls up to the Mitchell house.

EXT. TAXI

Alice gets out. She looks to Wilson's house. She sees the police cars. A terrible thought crosses her mind. She runs for the house.

268 OMITTED 268 (X)

269 INT. WILSON HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 269

Alice rushes in.

ALICE
Martha!?

She looks into the living room. Martha's with the Chief and two POLICE OFFICERS.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Alice steps into the room.

ALICE
Where's Dennis? (X)

DN9200103

270 EXT. WOODS. NIGHT 270

Dennis is riding his bike through the dark woods. The wind picks up.

EXT. WOODS. TREES

The wind whips the branches.

EXT. CLEARING

Seed heads CLATTERING in the wind.

(CONTINUED)

270 CONTINUED: 270

CU. DENNIS

An OWL HOOTS. Dennis looks up fearfully.

EXT. WOODS

Dennis breaks a mild crest and roars down into a gully. Ground birds take to the wing. DENNIS SCREAMS. The bike races downhill, gaining more speed than Dennis can handle.

HIS POV. MOVING

Ripping through the underbrush.

CU. DENNIS

Struggling to control the little bike. A COYOTE HOWLS. Dennis throws a look over his shoulder. He turns back and SCREAMS...

HIS POV

A dark figure is standing in the gully.

CU. BIKE PEDALS

Dennis mashes down on the pedals to engage the brakes.

EXT. GULLY. DENNIS

He skids into CAMERA.

CU. HANDLEBARS

A hand grabs the handlebars, stopping the bike.

CU. DENNIS

Leans back in fear.

HIS POV

Switchblade Sam leans in on him. Grinning.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
We meet again.

CU. DENNIS (X)

He's frightened. (X)

DN920103

271 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. DENNIS' ROOM. NIGHT 271

Alice throws open the door and turns on the light. She quickly scans the room.

ALICE
Dennis!

DN9200103

272 EXT. WOODS. RIDGE. NIGHT 272

Sam walks behind Dennis, holding his overall straps.

DENNIS
At first I was really scared because I thought you were a ghost or a killer. But then I recognized you. Now I'm not scared. You got any more of that chocolate?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
No.

DENNIS
Are we going to the tree house?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Nope.

DENNIS
You know what? I'm running away.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Good.

DENNIS
Yep. I caused a bunch of trouble and got yelled at. Old Mr. Wilson really hates my guts now 'cause I wrecked his party and the greatest moment of his life.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
That's a cryin' shame.

DENNIS
Yep. And his house got robbed. He's having a really bad night. So, it's probably a good idea that I spend the night with you.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Yeah. It's gonna work out fine. You can be my hostage.

DENNIS
Cool. (X)

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273 thru 274 OMITTED 273 thru (X) 274

275 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET. NIGHT 275

A police car is cruising slowly down the street, shining a search light across the front yards.

276 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. NIGHT 276

The lights are on.

277 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 277

Alice is on the phone. Martha is at the table.

ALICE
Joey hasn't seen him all day?
(listens)
If he shows up, please call me.

DN9200103

278 EXT. WILSON'S PATIO. NIGHT 278

Wilson is sitting alone and dejected on the patio. CAMERA PUSHES IN on him. He's worried. Frightened. DISSOLVE TO:

-- "Don't you ever come back!"
-- "He's a menace!"
-- "Your kid is driving me nuts!"
-- "Turn that off!"
-- "Don't make a pest of yourself."
-- "Don't embarrass me!"
-- "He's only a boy, huh?"
-- "I don't ever want to see you again as long as I live!"

279 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 279

Wilson's Oldsmobile roars out of the driveway.

280 EXT. WOODS. RAIL BRIDGE. NIGHT 280

Switchblade Sam's camp beneath the bridge, at the edge of the creek. Switchblade Sam is opening a large can of pork and beans with his knife. A pot is hung over the fire. Dennis is sitting on a rock in front of the fire.

DENNIS
What does a hostage have to do?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Nothing.

DENNIS
Howcome you need one?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
In case the cops show up.

DENNIS
Do I get to use a gun?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You get to stand in front of me, in case the cops use a gun.

Sam dumps the beans in the pot.

DENNIS
I can only be your hostage until tomorrow. I have church in the morning.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You ain't going to church. You and me are catching a train outta here.

(CONTINUED)

DN92001063

280 CONTINUED: 280

DENNIS
We have to stop at my house first. I'll have to tell my mom and dad. Otherwise they'll worry. And I have to get new underwear and my camera. And I have to tell my mom and dad to feed my fish. And I have to get sun block and vitamins and some stuff to play with on the train so I don't get bored.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Put a cork in it, you're giving me a headache.

DENNIS
I don't have a cork.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Shut your mouth.

DENNIS
I can't. My nose is stuffy because of my allergies and if I shut my mouth I can't breathe good.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Keep your mouth open but don't talk.

DENNIS
Where do you put the cork when you put a cork in it?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Didn't I ask you to shut your yap?

DENNIS
You asked me to shut my mouth.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
So shut it.

DENNIS
What's a yap?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
It's your mouth.

DENNIS
I can't shut my mouth because my nose is stuffy.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Shut up!

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

280 CONTINUED: (2) 280

Sam goes to his duffel bag. His back is to Dennis.

DENNIS
Your fire's getting puny. When my dad makes a fire and it gets puny, he wiggles it around and it gets bigger.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Good for your old man.

CU. DENNIS

He picks up a twig and sticks it in the fire.

CU. FIRE

Dennis stirs the embers.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He takes a plastic plate out of his duffel bag.

CU. DENNIS

Stirring the fire.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S REAR END

He's bent over. His shirt has risen up his back, his trousers are drooping. The top of his rump is exposed. There's a sizable gap between his buttocks and the waistband of his long johns.

CU. FIRE

As Dennis stirs, the twig flips an ember into the air.

EXT. CAMP. FIRE. UP ANGLE

SLOW MOTION. The ember sails up in a fine, high arc.

CU. DENNIS

Surprised. Slack jaw.

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Back to CAMERA. The ember hits the bare skin on his lower back and drops into his long johns.

CU. SAM

He's holding a metal coffee cup and a big spoon. He looks up with dread. A beat and he SCREAMS!

(CONTINUED)

DN9200102

280 CONTINUED: (3) 280

EXT. CAMP

Sam drops the cup and spoon and grabs his rump. He throws himself on the ground and grinds his bottom into the dirt, SCREAMING all the while. (X)

CU. DENNIS

Winces. He knows he's in big trouble.

EXT. CAMP. CREEK

Sam throws himself into the creek.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He breathes a deep sigh and looks to the fire.

HIS POV

Dennis is holding the twig. He forces a smile.

DENNIS
The fire's bigger now.

DN9200103

281 EXT. SCHOOL. PLAYGROUND. NIGHT 281

Wilson's car is parked. The headlights are pointed into the yard. Wilson cups his hands to his mouth.

WILSON
DENNIS!

282 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. NIGHT 282

Police cars in the driveway. A taxi pulls away.

283 INT. HOUSE. FOYER. NIGHT 283

Henry walks into the foyer. He's worried. He looks into the living room.

HENRY
Alice!

HIS POV

Two COPS sit with Martha and Alice. Alice looks to the foyer.

(CONTINUED)

283 CONTINUED: 283

CU. HENRY

He's afraid to ask what's happened.

284 EXT. CAMP. CU. BUSHES. NIGHT 284

Switchblade Sam's clothes are hung on the bushes to dry.

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

From behind, bent over his duffel bag, the seat of his long johns is charred, his lower back is blackened. He stands and turns. He's seething with anger, holding a length of rope and a pair of handcuffs.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You're finished, pipsqueak.

EXT. CAMP

Switchblade Sam grabs Dennis by the overalls and pulls him to his feet.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Turn around!

Dennis turns away from Sam. Sam bends over Dennis.

CU. DENNIS' ANKLES

Switchblade Sam wraps the rope around Dennis' ankles.

CU. DENNIS

Watching.

DENNIS
You're doing it wrong.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He pauses.

CU. DENNIS

He looks over his shoulder.

DENNIS
I had a baby-sitter once who tied me up just like that. I took my shoes off and I was out.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

284 CONTINUED: 284

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Hesitates.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Get lost. I tied up lots of guys in my life.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis shrugs.

DENNIS
Okay. I bet you never tied up a five-year-old. I'll just get away.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
I'll make this rope so tight, you won't be able to move.

DENNIS
The rope's too big and my legs are too small to make it get tight enough. There's only one way to do it and I know because lots of people have tried to tie me up. It doesn't work. But you try your way. I'll get out and you'll just have to keep doing it. (X) (X) (X) (X)

Switchblade Sam stands away.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
What do you do different?

Dennis takes the rope from Switchblade Sam.

DENNIS
Sit down.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
I can't.

DENNIS
Your buns are burnt. Sorry. It's okay. We'll do it standing up.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S ANKLES

Dennis wraps the rope around one ankle, making a tight loop.

CU. DENNIS

He looks up at Switchblade Sam.

(CONTINUED)

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284 CONTINUED: (2) 284

DENNIS
You gotta tie up each foot by itself. Then you tie them together.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Looking down at Dennis, paying strict attention. He nods.

EXT. CAMP. CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S ANKLES

Each ankle is secured separately and joined by a double width of rope. Rope shackles.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis is kneeling at Switchblade Sam's feet.

DENNIS
No matter how much I wiggle I can't get out.

Switchblade Sam struggles.

DENNIS
Tight, huh?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Yeah.

DENNIS
Then, if you really don't want me to move at all...

Dennis picks up the handcuffs.

DENNIS
Put one hand behind your back.

Switchblade Sam puts one hand behind his back.

DENNIS
Bend down.

He bends down. Dennis steps around behind him.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S ANKLES

One hand in front of the rope joining his ankles, one behind. Dennis snaps on the cuffs. They're under the rope.

EXT. CAMP

Sam is bent over, his wrists held low by the ankle rope.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

284 CONTINUED: (3) 284

SWITCHBLADE SAM
You could untie the ropes with your hands.

Dennis shakes his head, no.

DENNIS
I'm not done.

He takes a roll of duct tape off the duffel bag. He pulls off a length.

DENNIS
Instead of putting this on my mouth which you can't because I have a stuffy nose, you...

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S ANKLES

Dennis wraps Sam's hands with tape. (X)

EXT. CAMP

Dennis tears off the tape and stands up.

DENNIS
You can't get out of that at all, right?

Switchblade Sam struggles.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Nope.

DENNIS
I told you. You tie me up like that and I can't ever, ever get out.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Thanks. Let me loose now.

DENNIS
Okay.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
Get the handcuff key.

DENNIS
Where is it?

SWITCHBLADE SAM
It's next to my knife.

(CONTINUED)

DN92003010

284 CONTINUED: (4) 284

CU. KNIFE

It's on the rock Dennis was sitting on. Next to it is a small, silver handcuff key. Dennis picks up the key.

EXT. CAMP. DENNIS

He looks at the key with a smile. He steps over the rock, catches his foot and stumbles to the ground.

CU. BEANS

The key drops into the bean pot.

CU. DENNIS

He picks himself up and looks into the pot.

HIS POV

The key sinks into the simmering beans.

CU. DENNIS

Big surprised eyes.

DENNIS
Whoops.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Looks up awkwardly.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
(suspiciously)
What?

DN92001C3

285 EXT. CHURCH. NIGHT 285

Wilson's Olds is parked at the curb in front of the church. (X)
Wilson is on the sidewalk, hands in his pocket, nervous, (X)
uncomfortable. He looks up at the cross atop the church.

WILSON
Excuse me.
(clears his throat, sheepishly)
Listen, if you'd give me a hand, I'd appreciate it.
(pause)
See you in the morning.

286 CU. BEAN POT. NIGHT 286

Dennis spoons out a big helping.

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He's on his knees. Dennis holds the beans in front of him.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
I'm gonna kill you, kid.

DENNIS
How? You can't even move. Open up.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
I ain't hungry!

DENNIS
This is the only way we're gonna get the key. You can't waste food, plus you have to eat your dinner.

Dennis stuffs the spoon into Sam's mouth. He SHRIEKS.

DENNIS
Too hot?

287 EXT. PARK. NIGHT 287

Wilson walks through the park calling for Dennis.

WILSON
DENNIS!

288 INSERT: BEAN POT. NIGHT 288

A little sauce. Nothing else.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

On his back, chewing wearily, sweating, pained.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S BELLY

Bloated.

CU. POT

Dennis is spooning around in the bottom of the pot.

CU. DENNIS

Looks up. Puzzled.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

288 CONTINUED: 288

DENNIS
Uh, oh!

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Lifts his head. Stops chewing. A look of dread.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis scrapes the bottom of the pot with the spoon. (X)

DENNIS
You musta swallowed it.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
(with mouth full)
You little worm.

DENNIS
I swallowed my allowance once. I had to wait a whole night and day to get it back.

DN9200103

289 EXT. TOWN. BRIDGE. NIGHT 289

Wilson's at the railing looking into... (X)

HIS POV

The river runs fast.

CU. WILSON

Horrible thoughts run through his head.

290 EXT. RAILROAD BRIDGE. NIGHT 290

Dennis walks along the bridge struggling with a fat, two-foot-long chunk of rotted rail tie.

DENNIS
IF YOU WEREN'T SO CRABBY, THIS WOULD BE LIKE A CAMPING TRIP!

He walks to the edge of the bridge and drops the wood.

DENNIS
FIREWOOD! BOMBS AWAY!

(CONTINUED)

290 CONTINUED: 290

EXT. BRIDGE. UP ANGLE

The piece of wood falls...

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

On his back, looking up, squinting in the low light. His eyes suddenly widen in terror.

HIS POV

The wood falls INTO CAMERA.

EXT. CAMP

The wood clobbers Switchblade Sam, knocking him cold. (X)

EXT. EMBANKMENT

Dennis slides down the embankment.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis walks into the light of the fire and stops dead.

HIS POV

Switchblade Sam is knocked out.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis walks over to Switchblade Sam. He leans over him.

DENNIS
Poor little lamb. He must be exhausted. I better cover him up so he doesn't catch his death of cold.

Dennis crosses to Switchblade Sam's bedroll. He unties it.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He starts to come around. He moans and groans. He rolls to his side.

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He rises to his knees.

EXT. CAMP. DENNIS

He unfurls Sam's bedroll. The stolen clock is wrapped in it. It flies out.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

290 CONTINUED: (2) 290

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He's standing. He hops around to face...

HIS POV

The clock is hurtling towards him.

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

The clock smacks him in the head. He topples forward.

EXT. FIRE

The blanket drops over the fire.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis, unaware that he's put an end of the blanket in the fire, flutters it over to Sam. He covers him and returns to the fire. He spots the clock. He picks it up.

EXT. CAMP. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Out cold, covered with the blanket. It's smoldering at the end closest to his feet.

EXT. CAMP. DENNIS

He sits in front of the fire, his back to Sam. He examines the clock. Puts it to his ear and listens. Behind him, the blanket smokes. Dennis puts the clock in the duffel.

INSERT: DUFFEL BAG

Dennis puts the clock in the bag. Among the canned goods, tools, and clothing, he discovers Wilson's coins spilling out of a Seagram's bag.

EXT. CAMP. DENNIS

He takes the Seagram's bag out of the duffel. In the background, the blanket ignites.

DENNIS
Holy smokes! This is Mr. Wilson's gold!

He looks in the duffel bag.

INSERT: DUFFEL BAG

Dennis picks up the loose coins.

(CONTINUED)

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290 CONTINUED: (3) 290

EXT. CAMP. DENNIS

He puts the loose coins in the Seagram's bag. Behind him, Switchblade Sam is blazing.

CU. COINS

The light of the burning blanket ripples on the gold coins.

CU. DENNIS

A wall of fire behind him as he looks up from the coins. He sniffs and slowly looks over his shoulder.

HIS POV

Sam is on his belly. The blanket is engulfed in flame.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

Still out cold. He's sweating. His eyes slowly open.

CU. DENNIS

He gasps.

DENNIS
Yipes!

EXT. CAMP

Dennis grabs the duffel and runs to Sam...

CU. SAM

He lifts his head.

EXT. CAMP. DENNIS

He slams the duffel down on Sam to extinguish the flames.

CU. SAM

The canned goods in the bottom of the duffel knock him cold.

EXT. CAMP

Dennis jumps up and down on the duffel covering Sam.

291 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT. LATER 291

Wilson's Oldsmobile pulls into the driveway. He gets out.

(CONTINUED)

DN92001C3

291 CONTINUED: 291

EXT. PORCH

Henry and Alice are sitting on the porch with Martha. They're tired and weary. Alice's face is swollen from crying. They look to the driveway.

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. YARD

Wilson walks slowly across the lawn to the sidewalk. He's filled with grief and guilt.

WILSON
I couldn't find him.

EXT. PORCH

Wilson climbs the porch stairs.

WILSON
This is my fault. I'm sorry.

ALICE
It's not your fault. I shouldn't have gone away. I shouldn't have gone back to work.

WILSON
That's not the cause, Alice. It's me. I hurt Dennis. I said some terrible things to him. Things that no man should ever say to a child. Hurtful, destructive things.

HENRY
We'll find him, George. You don't have to feel that way.

WILSON
I'll tell you something I never told anybody, something I never even knew until tonight. I can't be nice to the little bugger because I'm too damned ashamed to admit that I love him.

CU. MARTHA

She's startled by the admission.

CU. ALICE

She manages a smile.

(CONTINUED)

PN9200103

291 CONTINUED: (2) 291

CU. HENRY

He looks away. He understands how ashamed Wilson is to reveal his feelings.

CU. WILSON

Tears in his eyes.

WILSON
If anything happens to him, I'll never forgive myself.

MUSIC COMES UP. SOMBER, FINAL.

292 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET. NIGHT 292

Kids' flashlights play across the trees and bushes. (X)

292A EXT. ANOTHER STREET. NIGHT 292A (X

Henry's walking down the sidewalk with his flashlight. His jacket's off, his tie is loosened. He's drained. (X) (X)

293 OMITTED 293 (X)

DN9200103

294 EXT. STREET. GUTTER. NIGHT 294

Joey is shining his flashlight down the sewer. He looks in sadly.

295 EXT. PARK. NIGHT 295

A hoard of BABY-SITTERS, lead by Polly and Mickey, spread out across the park. (X) (X)

296 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. WIDE. NIGHT 296

Hundreds of flashlights flickering all across town. CAMERA SINKS THROUGH THE TREES to the Wade house and in on Margaret sitting in her bedroom window. She's sad, on the verge of tears.

MARGARET
(heavy sigh)
I've lost the only man I've ever loved.

297 EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE. LATER. NIGHT 297

The living room light is on.

298 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 298

Alice is curled up on the couch, asleep. Henry's asleep in a chair. (X) (X)

299 INT. WILSON HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 299

Martha's sleeping on her couch.

300 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PORCH. NIGHT 300

The porch light is on. Wilson is sitting on the porch swing. He's awake. He takes out his pocket watch and flips it open.

INSERT: WATCH

It reads 3:25.

300A EXT. WOODS. NIGHT 300A (:

COPS, local and state, comb the underbrush. (X)

301 EXT. CAMP. CREEK. NIGHT 301

COPS kick the campfire coals, look through the spilled canned goods, inspect the cooking pot. (X) (X)

301A EXT. CREEK. NIGHT 301A (:

A COP walks along the creek shining his flashlight into the water. He walks into CLOSE-UP. A fearful look on his face. (X) (X)

HIS POV (X)

Dennis' teddy bear is hung-up on a fallen branch in the creek. The water flows swiftly past. DISSOLVE TO... (X) (X)

DN9200103

302 thru 314 OMITTED 302 thru (X) 314

315 EXT. SMALL TOWN. DAWN. WIDE 315

The suburban village bathed in yellow/pink light.

DN9200103

316 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET. MORNING 316

A PAPER BOY rides his bike down the street. Tossing papers.

317 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. MORNING 317

His paper flies INTO FRAME and lands in the bushes.

CU. WILSON

Sleeping on the porch swing. He opens his eyes slowly. He sits (X)
up. (X)

EXT. WILSON HOUSE

He comes down off the porch. He reaches into the bushes for his paper. He tucks it under his arm.

CU. WILSON

He cups his hand to his ear and listens carefully. Nothing.

EXT. WILSON HOUSE

Wilson slowly climbs the porch steps. He stops at the top. He turns to the street.

CU. WILSON

He senses something. He cups his hand to his ear again. He smiles.

318 ECU. BICYCLE TRAINING WHEEL. MORNING 318

Turning. Wobbling wildly as the bicycle rocks from one training (X)
wheel to the other. There is a HORRIBLE SCRAPING, RATTLING, (X)
JANGLING, GRINDING SOUND. (X)

319 EXT. TREES. MORNING 319

Birds take to the wing.

EXT. STREET

Two cats scatter, heading for cover.

320 CU. BICYCLE PEDAL. MORNING 320

A battered, muddy sneaker is pumping madly. (X)

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

320 CONTINUED: 320

CU. HANDLEBARS

A dirty, little hand on the plastic handle grip. Streamers flutter in the wind. The RACKET CONTINUES.

CU. BICYCLE. BACK FENDER

A frayed piece of clothesline is tied to the back fender (X)
supports. CAMERA FOLLOWS the rope to the handle of a beat-up (X)
red wagon. CAMERA CONTINUES TO horribly scuffed, bloodied, (X)
muddy, bare feet bound tightly, to spindly legs in wet, dirty, (X)
torn, burned long johns, to a baggy, burned, shredded crotch, to (X)
a bloated, blistered, scraped gut, bristling with burnt body (X)
hair, to blistered, dirty, crimped, handcuffed hands, to a wet, (X)
muddy, torn T-shirt, to the muddy, bloody, swollen, toothless, (X)
bent-nose, black-eyed face of Switchblade Sam. His head bangs (X)
against the back of the wagon. The NOISE CONTINUES. (X)

321 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. MORNING 321

Wilson runs down the porch steps.

WILSON
MARTHA! MITCHELL!

322 INT. WILSON HOUSE. MORNING 322

Martha stirs on the sofa.

323 INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. MORNING 323

Henry's eyes open.

DN9200103

324 EXT. SIDEWALK. CU. BICYCLE. PEDALS. MORNING 324

Sneakers jam down on the pedals, engaging the brakes. (X)

CU. BICYCLE TIRE

Skids and stutters to a stop.

CU. WAGON

It slams into the back of the bicycle. Switchblade Sam's head heaves forward and slams back against the wagon. He groans.

(CONTINUED)

324 CONTINUED: 324

CU. TRAINING WHEEL

Off the ground and spinning to a SQUEAKY stop.

CU. DENNIS

Dirty face, dirty hair, blue-blue eyes bright and awake, big grin. He yells at the top of his voice.

DENNIS
HEY! MR. WILSON! (X)

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. WILSON

He smiles.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He slowly turns his head to Wilson.

SWITCHBLADE SAM
(hoarse)
Help.

DN9200103

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. SIDEWALK

Dennis dismounts. With his weight off the bike, the front of the wagon tips up. Switchblade Sam crashes to the pavement. (X)

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PORCH

Wilson drops to a knee. He holds his arms open wide.

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. FRONT YARD

Dennis runs to him. Wilson folds him into his arms.

DENNIS
Guess what?! (X)

Dennis unties the Seagram's bag from his belt and hands it to Wilson.

DENNIS
I got your gold back.

Wilson smiles.

(CONTINUED)

324 CONTINUED: (2) 324

WILSON
I don't care about the gold. (X)

DENNIS
Really? Can I have it? (X)

EXT. MITCHELL HOUSE

Alice and Henry rush out the door. They run into CLOSE-UP. (X)

ALICE
DENNIS!

CU. DENNIS

He turns and smiles.

DENNIS
Mom!

DN9200103

EXT. WILSON HOUSE

Henry and Alice run to Dennis. Wilson stands. Dennis races to Alice. She kneels and Dennis runs into her arms.

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. PORCH

Martha hobbles out. She sees the reunion and smiles. She grabs her heart and lets out a sigh. (X) (X)

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. ALICE AND DENNIS

Alice breaks the embrace.

ALICE
Sweetheart, where have you been?

DENNIS
I caught the robber.

Alice looks beyond Dennis to...

HER POV

The wagon. Switchblade Sam rolls his head to Alice.

(CONTINUED)

324 CONTINUED: (3) 324

SWITCHBLADE SAM
(hoarse)
Help.

324A EXT. STREET. MORNING 324A (:

A pair of squad cars race around the corner, lights and sirens going. The cars jerk to a stop in front of the Wilson house. A gaggle of KIDS on bikes are following the squad cars. (X) (X) (X)

324B EXT. ALLEY. MORNING 324B (:

KIDS race down the alley, jumping over backyard fences to join the throng. Joey leads the charge. (X) (X)

324C EXT. WADE HOUSE. MORNING 324C (:

The front door flies open and Margaret charges out. (X)

325 EXT. SQUAD CAR. MORNING 325 (:

The Chief gets out of the car and steps into CLOSE-UP. He grins. (X) (X)

HIS POV (X)

Switchblade Sam looks up at him. (X)

SWITCHBLADE SAM (X)
Help. (X)

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD. STREET. LATER (X)

A pair of OFFICERS help Switchblade Sam to his tender feet. The Chief picks up Sam's duffel bag. (X) (X)

CHIEF (X)
You can tell everybody at the Big House you met our Dennis Mitchell. (X) (X)

DN9200103

326 OMITTED 326 (X)

327 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. LAWN. DENNIS. MORNING 327

He accepts the adulation of the neighborhood Kids. He looks to the squad car. Something occurs to him.

(CONTINUED)

327 CONTINUED: 327

DENNIS
Oops! Wait a second!

EXT. WILSON HOUSE. STREET

Dennis breaks out of the group of Kids and runs to the squad car. Switchblade Sam sits gently in the backseat. The door is still open. He's momentarily left unguarded as the Officer who put him in the car opens the front door for the other Officer who loads the duffel bag, the clock, and the purse on the seat.

(CONTINUED)

DN9200103

327 CONTINUED: (2) 327

CU. DENNIS

He reaches into his pocket.

DENNIS
Mister, you forgot something.

ECU. DENNIS' OVERALL POCKET

He takes out the knife.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM

He grins as he reaches out his cuffed hands.

CU. DENNIS

He hands the knife to Switchblade Sam.

CU. SWITCHBLADE SAM'S HANDS

Just reaching out of the car. He takes the knife.

EXT. STREET. POLICE CAR

The Officer slams the back door. (X)

EXT. GUTTER

The knife falls to the street, bounces and drops down the storm sewer.

INT. POLICE CAR. SWITCHBLADE SAM

His mouth is open in a silent scream. He yanks his mashed hands inside the car.

EXT. STREET. POLICE CAR. FRONT ANGLE (X)

The squad car pulls away from the curb. Kids chase after it. (X)

327A EXT. WILSON HOUSE. LAWN. MORNING 327A (X)

Dennis watches the police car pull away. He smiles and turns to face... (X) (X)

CU. MARGARET (X)

She pushes her glasses up on her nose. (X)

(CONTINUED)

DN92001O3

327A CONTINUED: 327A (:

MARGARET (X)
I'm overwhelmed with joy that you're (X)
not completely killed and gone forever, (X)
Dennis. (X)

EXT. STREET. DENNIS AND MARGARET (X)

Dennis leans back from Margaret. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Thanks. (X)

MARGARET (X)
After staying up almost all night and (X)
losing a ton of my beauty sleep I (X)
decided that of all the gross and weird (X)
boys in the neighborhood, you're the (X)
one that I love the most. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Oh, no. (X)

CU. MARGARET (X)

She wipes her lips with the back of her hand. (X)

MARGARET (X)
Yep. So let's get this thing over (X)
with. (X)

She puckers up, closes her eyes and leans forward. (X)

CU. DENNIS (X)

His eyes open wide in terror. (X)

DN9200103

327B INT. MITCHELL HOUSE. MORNING 327B (:

FROM THE STAIRS down to the foyer. The front door flies open (X)
and Dennis runs in and charges up the stairs. (X)

327C INT. BEDROOM. MORNING 327C (:

Dennis races into his room, throws himself on the floor and (X)
slides under his bed. (X)

328 EXT. WILSON HOUSE. NIGHT 328

The lights are on. Kids are playing in the street.

329 EXT. WILSON PATIO. NIGHT 329

Dennis is roasting a marshmallow over the barbecue grill. Henry and Alice and Wilson and Martha are sitting on the patio having coffee.

ALICE
The good news is I'm not going to have to travel anymore. They want me to stay with the project here. And they agreed to start a daycare program at the office. So, I can take Dennis with me to work. (X) (X) (X) (X) (X) (X)

WILSON
That's ridiculous. What the heck's he gonna do all day? Don't be foolish. We're right next door. We can watch him. (X) (X) (X) (X) (X)

MARTHA
We'd love to.

HENRY
You have to remember back to all the times Dennis upset you... (X) (X)

DN9200103

EXT. PATIO. DENNIS

The marshmallow has caught fire. Dennis is unsuccessfully blowing on it to put the fire out. (X)

EXT. PATIO

Henry and Alice don't think much of the idea. They're worried Wilson's not considering the downside.

(CONTINUED)

329 CONTINUED: 329

WILSON (X)
This is a new ball game. I've learned a few things. Kids are kids. They play by their own rules. If you can't buy that, you're looking for trouble. You have to roll with the punches, you have to expect the unexpected.

EXT. PATIO. DENNIS

Dennis whips the marshmallow back and forth trying to blow the flame out. He gives it a big whip toward the patio. The marshmallow flies off the stick.

CU. WILSON

His eyes bulge.

HIS POV

The flaming marshmallow FLIES INTO CAMERA.

EXT. PATIO. WILSON

The marshmallow smacks him in the forehead and sticks. He SCREAMS.

DN9200103

330 BLACK - MUSIC COMES UP. END TITLES ROLL OVER... 330

INT. OFFICE. COPY ROOM. DAY (X)

Alice's prickly coworker, Andrea, is photocopying a lease. She (X) stands over a large copy machine. She's wearing a blouse, a (X) skirt, and a flouncy scarf. Dennis is standing next to her. (X)

ANDREA (X)
Aren't you supposed to be in the (X)
daycare area with the other... (X)
(distastefully) (X)
...children. (X)

DENNIS (X)
That's where I was but I had to leave (X)
because the lady who watches the kids (X)
said if she had to look at me for five (X)
more seconds she'd jump out the window. (X)
She's a pretty nice lady so I wouldn't (X)
want her to do that. What're you (X)
copying? (X)

ANDREA (X)
A lease for a toy store. (X)

330 CONTINUED: 330 (:

DENNIS (X)
My mom says if you put toy stores up on (X)
top of a mall, parents gotta go through (X)
all the other floors... (X)

ANDREA (X)
Would you please leave me alone? I (X)
have work to do. (X)

DENNIS (X)
Can I push the button? (X)

Andrea leans over the machine, positioning the document she (X)
wants copied. (X)

ANDREA (X)
You don't know which button to push. (X)

CU. ANDREA'S SCARF (X)

It's on the paper feed shelf. (X)

INT. COPY ROOM (X)

Andrea's hunched over the machine. Dennis is looking at the (X)
control panel. (X)

DENNIS (X)
It's this one. (X)

Dennis presses the button. (X)

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CU. ANDREA SCARF (X)

The machine turns on. The scarf is yanked into the paper feed. (X)

INT. COPY ROOM (X)

Andrea's head is snapped forward. (X)

CU. ANDREA (X)

UP THROUGH THE COPY GLASS. Andrea's startled face slams down on (X)
the glass. (X)

INT. COPY ROOM (X)

Andrea's face is on the copier. The copier light travels across (X)
the copy glass. She's fumbling with the buttons, SCREAMING. (X)

331 INT. OFFICE. CORRIDOR. DAY 331 (:

Dennis runs full speed down the corridor and disappears around a corner. (X) (X)

332 CU. COPY MACHINE. DAY 332 (:

A photo copy of Andrea's face slides out of the machine. Her lip stick is smeared across her cheek, her nose is mashed to the side, one eye is open wide, the other is closed, and her tongue is pressed against the glass. (X) (X) (X) (X)

INT. COPY ROOM (X)

Andrea's scarf tears off her neck. She keels over. (X)

CREDITS CONTINUE TO END (X)

DN9200103